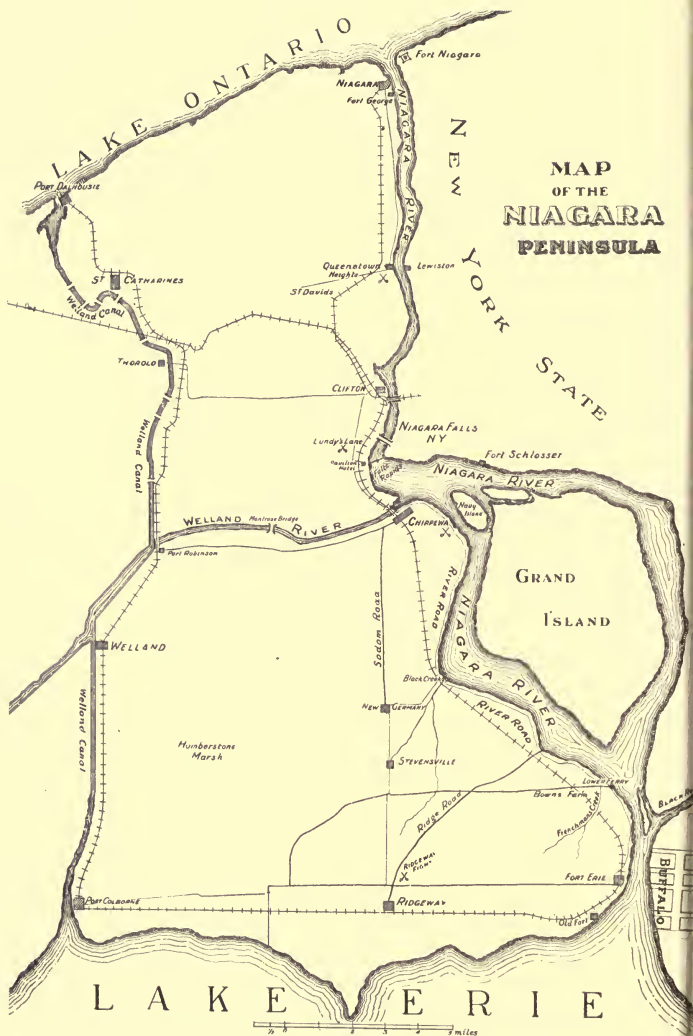






HISTORY OF THE WAR OF 1812



HISTORY OF THE WAR OF 1812

BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN
AND
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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P R E F A C E

THIS book has been written for the purpose of placing before the people of Canada, in a single volume, the story of the defence of our country from foreign invasion during the last war between Great Britain and the United States of America. As this defence could not have been successful but for the hearty coöperation of our ancestors, the people of Canada of that day, this war ought to be regarded as Canada's first and greatest contribution to the work of empire building, for the fervent loyalty, which a few years ago, sent so many of the sons of Canada to fight the battles of Great Britain in South Africa, received its first illustration on the battlefields of the War of 1812.

I have not thought it necessary to burden the pages of this book with foot notes and references to authorities, because the official sources of our knowledge of the war are so few in number as to render such references unnecessary. For the movements of the armies, the numbers of the British troops engaged, and the losses of the latter, I have relied on the British official despatches. For the numbers of the American armies and their losses, I have accepted the American official despatches, except where they were manifestly in error.

No doubt it will be said by some critics that in this book I have been too severe on the Americans who invaded our country, burnt our towns, ravaged our fields, slaughtered our people and tried to place us under a foreign flag. But I maintain that any Canadian author has a right to challenge the motives and the conduct of the men who did these things, and I see no reason why any American of the present day should feel offended at reflections on the actions of men who lived ninety years ago. While endeavouring to present an absolutely truthful narrative of the War of 1812, I have not felt it necessary to refrain from criticizing the conduct of the men who were responsible for the contest or who took part in it.

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THE WAR OF 1812

CHAPTER I

CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE WAR

THE war which began in the year 1812 between Great Britain and the United States of America, although it originated in an imperial quarrel, and was carried on mainly by British money and largely by British troops, was essentially a Canadian contest. Canada was the scene of most of the battles of the war; it was for the purpose of separating Canada from the British crown that the war was undertaken; and it was owing to the loyalty, constancy and courage of the Canadian people that this object was foiled. Every Canadian can, therefore, look back with feelings of just pride to this war so honourable to his ancestors, and so worthy of being remembered for the example which it affords of the difficulty of subduing a resolute and free people with arms in their hands and with the courage to use them.

At the close of the War of the Revolution there was much bitterness felt towards Great Britain by the people who had won their independence from her by the sword. This independence had been gained by the assistance of France, and although that country was then a monarchy, beyond all comparison more illiberal than the government of Great Britain, it was perhaps but natural that the new nation should turn to France and cultivate her friendship. The tremendous revolution which broke out in that country a few years later, at first only served to cement the ties of sympathy between

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France and the United States; and although its subsequent excesses estranged Washington and many other eminent men, there still remained a large and extremely violent party, headed by Jefferson, which was ready to condone all the faults of the French republic, and which felt an undying enmity to Great Britain. It was at this period that parties began to form themselves, and that the terms "Federalist," and "Democrat," were heard for the first time. The Democrats, of whom Jefferson was the head, showed an extreme hostility to Great Britain, while the Federalists, although not deficient in patriotism, held much more moderate views and were disposed to cultivate her friendship.

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The war which broke out in 1792 between France and Great Britain, and which continued with but a short interval for more than twenty years, drew still more sharply the lines between these two parties. The French government sent out "Citizen" Genet as minister to the United States, and he forthwith proceeded, with the active coöperation of the anti-British party, to make that country a base for the prosecution of war against the commerce of Great Britain. Washington, who was then president, issued a proclamation of neutrality, warning citizens of the United States not to take part in the contest, but so strong was the feeling in favour of France, that the proclamation and its author were assailed in such terms as a citizen of the United States of the present day must blush to read. It was styled a "royal edict," "a daring and unwarrantable assumption of executive power," and Washington was denounced as a "Monarchist," and a friend of England. Many of these attacks on the president appeared in the *National Gazette*, but it was not until Freneau, its editor, was nearing the dark valley of death that it was disclosed that these violent articles against Washington were written or dictated by Thomas Jefferson, who figures as the author of the Declaration of Independence, and who, at the very time these attacks were made, was secretary of state in Washington's Cabinet.

The French minister, Genet, in defiance of Washington's

proclamation, proceeded to fit out privateers in Philadelphia to prey upon British commerce, these privateers being manned by citizens of the United States. When the president released some British prizes which had been taken by them and carried into Philadelphia to be condemned, Genet stormed and raved and announced his intention of appealing from the president to the people. This was virtually a threat to excite an insurrection for the purpose of overthrowing the authority of a chief magistrate elected by the people; yet so mentally debauched had Jefferson become that his newspaper actually sustained Genet in this course. The organ of this model secretary of state expressed the hope that the friends of France would act with firmness and spirit, saying, "The people are his friends, or the friends of France, and he will have nothing to apprehend." It turned out, however, that "Citizen" Genet had something to apprehend,—the indignation of Washington, who requested the French government to recall its minister.

In the meantime the death struggle between Great Britain and France was producing a series of retaliatory measures which proved ruinous to the neutral trader. In June, 1793, an order-in-council was issued by the British government declaring that all vessels laden with breadstuffs bound to any port of France, or places occupied by French armies, should be carried to England, and their cargoes either disposed of there, or security given that they would be sold only in a country which was friendly towards Great Britain. This was followed in November of the same year by another order-in-council which directed British war vessels and privateers to detain all ships carrying the produce of any colony belonging to France, or conveying provisions or other supplies for the use of such colonies, and to bring the same with their cargoes to legal adjudication in the British courts of admiralty.

* These orders-in-council fell with heavy effect on the commerce of the United States, and produced a corresponding degree of indignation. This was increased by another measure adopted about the same time by the British government—

the impressment of British seamen found on board of American vessels. This measure was based on the doctrine, then recognized by all European nations, that a subject could not renounce his allegiance, and that the government under whose flag he was born had a right to his services wherever he might be found. This involved the right of search both of war vessels and commercial ships—a claim most obnoxious in every way, but more especially as the exercise of this right was liable to great abuse. It is singular that in 1861, long after the right of search had been abandoned by Great Britain, it was revived by Commodore Wilkes of the United States navy, when he boarded the British mail steamer *Trent*, and took from her Messrs. Mason and Slidell, the Confederate commissioners then on their way to England. It is still more singular that this act, so universally condemned in Great Britain, was almost as universally approved by public opinion in the United States; so true is it that nations are generally guided in their views of public questions by motives of expediency and self-interest. Congress, in 1812, regarded the exercise of the right of search by Great Britain as a “crying enormity,” and declared war against her for that cause, yet Congress in 1861 passed a vote of thanks to Commodore Wilkes for his exercise of the right of search in an extremely aggravated form. In neither case was Congress fortunate in its expression of opinion, for in 1815 the government of the United States was forced to conclude a treaty of peace with Great Britain in which the right of search, the ostensible cause of the war, was not so much as mentioned, while in 1861, a few days after the vote of thanks was passed, the same government was obliged to give up Messrs. Mason and Slidell, on the demand of the British government, and acknowledge itself in the wrong.

For the purpose of endeavouring to effect a settlement of the difficulties which had arisen out of the enforcement of the orders-in-council and the right of search, Washington sent John Jay, chief justice of the United States, as envoy extraordinary to the court of Great Britain. The result of

this mission was what is known as the Jay Treaty, which, after providing for the disposal of most of the unsettled questions between the two countries, contained a number of commercial provisions which proved of great advantage to the United States. Under it American vessels were allowed to enter British ports in Europe and the East Indies on equal terms with British vessels, while participation in the East Indian coasting trade, and trade between European and British East Indian ports was left to the contingency of British permission. American vessels not exceeding seventy tons were allowed to trade with the British West Indies on condition that they should not, during the continuance of the treaty, transport from America to Europe any of the principal colonial products. British vessels were to be admitted into American ports on the same terms as those of the most favoured nation. There were provisions for the protection of neutral property on the high seas; these provided that a vessel entering a blockaded port should not be liable to capture unless previously notified of the blockade. There were also arrangements to prevent the arming of the privateers of any nation at war with the two contracting parties, and the capture of goods in the bays and harbours of either nation. In the event of war between the two countries, the citizens or subjects of either were not to be molested, if peaceable; and fugitives from justice charged with high crimes were to be mutually given up. The commercial arrangements of the treaty were limited in their operation to two years after the termination of the war in which Great Britain was then engaged. The treaty was ratified by the Senate and signed by the president in the summer of 1795.

It might have been supposed that this treaty, which was extremely favourable to the commerce of the United States, would have been received with satisfaction by the people of that country, but it was far otherwise. The Democrats had resolved to oppose it no matter what its provisions might be, especially if it should remove all pretext for a war with Great Britain. They had already disclosed the spirit which influ-

enced them by their violent opposition to Jay's appointment, and when the treaty was before the Senate efforts were made to intimidate the members of that body so that they might refuse to ratify it. Democratic newspapers told their readers that they should blush to think, "America should degrade herself so much as to enter into any kind of a treaty with a power now tottering on the brink of ruin." France, according to these newspapers, was the natural ally of the United States, and the nation on whom their political existence depended. "The nation on whom our political existence depends," said one of these publications, "we have treated with indifference bordering on contempt. Let us unite with France and stand or fall together." These words so truthfully stated the result of the War of 1812 that they may be regarded as almost prophetic. The United States did virtually unite with France, and together they fell.

When the treaty was ratified and signed, Mr. Jay, the senators, and the president became the objects of a storm of vituperation from the entire Democratic party. Jay was denounced as a traitor who had been purchased by British gold and was threatened with the guillotine. Hamilton and other speakers who attempted to defend the treaty at a public meeting in New York were stoned by the friends of Jefferson who sat at the same council table with him. In Virginia secession was threatened, while in Charleston the British flag was trailed in the dust and burned at the door of the British consul. The people of the South, who held their fellow-men of another colour in bondage, and dealt in them as chattels, were greatly enraged because the treaty did not provide that they should be paid for such of their negroes as were carried away during the Revolutionary War. Others felt a sense of wrong and outrage because the treaty provided for the payment of honest debts contracted before the war, such a stipulation being in their opinion wholly inconsistent with those principles of liberty which impelled the patriots of the Revolution to plunder their loyal neighbours, and confiscate their property.

The conduct of the Democratic party in 1795 sufficiently showed the violence of the animosity against Great Britain which existed in the minds of a large body of the people of the United States twelve years after the War of the Revolution had been brought to a close. But when the treaty went into operation it was found to be highly advantageous to the merchants and shipowners of the United States. The French Directory, however, was greatly enraged, and issued a secret order authorizing French ships of war to treat neutral vessels in the same manner as they had suffered themselves to be treated by the English. Under this order many American vessels were seized in the West Indies by French cruisers, and their crews treated with great indignity and cruelty. Indeed, at this period the French government showed a strong disposition to take entire charge of the politics of the United States, and Commodore Joshua Barney, an American in the naval service of France, who came to Philadelphia in 1796 with two frigates which he commanded, told the citizens of that place that if Jefferson were not elected president, war would be declared by France against the United States within three months. So true was this, that the election of John Adams, a Federalist, who was chosen instead of Jefferson, resulted in the issuing of a decree by the French Directory which was equivalent to a declaration of war. It not only authorized the capture of American vessels under certain conditions, but declared that any American found on board of a hostile ship, although placed there by impressment, should be hanged as a pirate. The American minister was ordered to leave France and three envoys extraordinary who were sent in his place to arrange all matters in dispute were treated with contempt and refused an audience. All these circumstances produced great indignation in the United States, and in the spring of 1798, although no actual declaration of war had been issued, war with France was commenced on the ocean. The fall of the Directory and the assumption of authority by Bonaparte as first consul, however, speedily put an end to hostilities.

This brief summary of the progress of events after the Revolution will serve to show more clearly the character of the questions which arose from time to time between the two nations, and which finally resulted in the War of 1812. The United States throughout the long war between Great Britain and France stood in the unfortunate position of a neutral power whose commerce was certain to suffer from the several orders-in-council and decrees which the belligerents launched against each other. The accession of Bonaparte to supreme power, although it brought the war between France and the United States to a close, instead of improving their condition as neutrals, made it much worse. In May, 1806, the British government declared the whole coast of Europe from the Elbe to Brest, the territory occupied by the French armies, to be in a state of blockade. In November of the same year Bonaparte issued the famous Berlin decree proclaiming the British Isles to be in a state of blockade, forbidding all correspondence or trade with England, and declaring all articles of English produce or manufacture contrabrand, and the property of all British subjects to be lawful prize of war. As the French fleets had been wholly destroyed, and the French government had scarcely a vessel at sea, this was simply a "paper blockade." The same term has been applied by American writers to the British blockade of the eight hundred miles of coast from Brest to the Elbe, on the alleged ground that Great Britain had not sufficient ships to enforce it. Yet in 1806 the British navy numbered more than eight hundred vessels, manned by one hundred and forty thousand men. Some of the objectors to this so called "paper blockade" lived to see President Lincoln proclaim three thousand miles of the coast of the southern states to be blockaded, although the Federal navy of that period numbered only ninety vessels, of which less than half were in commission.

The British answer to the Berlin decree was an order-in-council of November, 1807, by which all neutral trade with France or her allies was prohibited unless through Great

Britain. In December of the same year Bonaparte issued his Milan decree which was a sort of supplement to that of Berlin. It declared every vessel which submitted to be searched by British cruisers, or paid any tax, duty or license money to the British government, or was found on the high seas or elsewhere bound to or from any British port, to be denationalized and forfeited. Spain and Holland, at the dictation of France, immediately issued similar decrees, and thus was established the famous continental system of Napoleon which crushed the neutral trader. It was a system which grew out of Bonaparte's determination to destroy Great Britain and break up the British empire, a resolve which was warmly approved by a large number of the people of the United States. In their insane hatred of England they were ready to aid in the destruction of the only constitutional government then existing in Europe, and in the establishment of the grinding military despotism of Bonaparte over the greater portion of the civilized world.

While the British orders-in-council and Bonaparte's decrees were agitating commercial circles in the United States, the impressment of British seamen found on board of American vessels had become a source of great ill-feeling towards England. In 1800 the British minister had proposed a reciprocal surrender of all deserters, but this was declined by the United States because the proposal was so worded as to sanction impressment on private vessels. They contended that the neutral flag was the safeguard of those sailing under it, a doctrine, the application of which was greatly in favour of the United States, as it enabled them to recruit their navy with deserters from British ships. As a measure of retaliation, in March, 1806, the United States Congress passed a Non-Importation Act, prohibiting the importation of nearly every article of British manufacture. The Act was to be in abeyance until the following November, and in the meantime negotiations were again opened for a treaty which should put an end to the difficulties between the two nations.

William Pinkney of Maryland was sent as envoy extraordinary to London to join with Monroe, the resident minister, in this work. Negotiations commenced in August, and after some delay a treaty was arranged in most respects more favourable than the Jay Treaty. The British government declined to relinquish the right of impressment by formal treaty, but the British commissioners put into writing a statement that it was the intention of the government not to allow impressments from American vessels on the high seas except under extraordinary circumstances, such as having on board known deserters from the British navy. The new treaty placed the trade between the United States and the European possessions of Great Britain on a footing of perfect reciprocity. It was also stipulated that no American vessels could be visited or seized by British cruisers within five miles of the coast of the United States. But the time spent in the negotiation of this treaty was wasted, for Jefferson, who was then president, had resolved upon a step which would effectually prevent it from going into operation. Instead of laying it before the Senate for ratification or rejection, as it was his duty to do, he usurped the authority which the constitution had vested in that body, and entirely suppressed this important treaty, which would undoubtedly have been the means of insuring a lasting peace between the two countries. This action proved that Jefferson and his advisers did not desire any accommodation of existing grievances, but only war.

At this juncture a very unfortunate affair took place which produced much ill-feeling. While a British squadron was near Cape Henry, Virginia, three of the crew of the frigate *Melampus* deserted. These men were enlisted on board the United States frigate *Chesapeake*, and a demand made by the British minister for their restoration was refused. The *Chesapeake* some time afterwards put to sea and was by the orders of Vice-Admiral Berkeley, overhauled by the British 50-gun ship *Leopard*. Captain Humphreys, of that ship, demanded the delivery of the deserters on board the *Chesapeake*, and on this being refused poured several broadsides into the latter,

killing three men and wounding eighteen, and compelling the American vessel to strike her flag.

This act was immediately disavowed by the British government and the admiral recalled. In the United States the affair produced the liveliest indignation, which was not mitigated in the least by the earnest efforts of Great Britain to settle the matter amicably. A proclamation was issued by the president forbidding all persons to have any intercourse with or to sell any supplies to British war vessels in the waters of the United States, and warlike preparations were made on an extensive scale. Messrs. Monroe and Pinkney were sent to England in the armed schooner *Revenge* to make a number of demands on the British government, including the abandonment of the right of search. Great Britain was quite ready to make reparation in the *Chesapeake* affair, but declined to treat on the other matters, Mr. Canning telling the envoys plainly, that, while he was ready to listen to any suggestions with a view to the removal of existing difficulties, he would not negotiate anew on the basis of a treaty concluded and signed and already rejected by one of the parties.

The envoys returned home, and then was passed the famous Embargo Act which prohibited all vessels in the ports of the United States, except foreign ships in ballast, or with cargoes taken on board before the notification of the Act, from sailing for any foreign port. Coastwise vessels were required to give heavy bonds to land their cargoes in the United States. This Act, which is the most remarkable example on record of a nation destroying its own foreign trade in the hope of thereby injuring another nation with which it had large dealings, utterly failed to effect the object for which it was passed. It became law in December, 1807, and, after being made more stringent by several amending and enforcing Acts, was finally repealed in March, 1809, it having been found only injurious to the nation that enacted it. In a single year under its operation the imports of the United States fell from \$138,500,000 to \$56,990,000 and the exports from \$108,343,000 to \$22,430,000. In lieu of the Embargo Act a Non-

Intercourse Act was passed by which the commerce of the United States was opened to all the world except England and France. As the latter country had little or no commerce with the United States, it was quite evident, that, as before, England was the only nation aimed at by this measure. The relations between Great Britain and the United States continued to grow more strained, and they were not improved when, in 1809, the latter government requested the recall of Mr. Jackson, the British minister at Washington. The English government did not take the trouble to send another minister to replace him until 1811.

In the meantime the government of the United States, which had every year been growing more friendly to France, was endeavouring to make terms with that country for a relaxation of the continental system. As a result of this, in August, 1810, the French minister of foreign affairs, in a despatch to the American minister at Paris, stated that the Berlin and Milan decrees were revoked, and that their operation would cease from the first of November following, "It being understood that in consequence of this declaration, the English shall revoke their orders-in-council, and renounce the new principles of blockade which they have wished to establish, or that the United States, conformably to their law, will cause their rights to be respected by the English." The meaning of the last clause of this communication might be somewhat obscure were it not from our knowledge of the fact that Minister Armstrong had been instructed to offer, in addition to the repeal of the Embargo Act, a declaration of war against Great Britain should that government refuse to recall the orders-in-council after the emperor had withdrawn his Berlin and Milan decrees. This offer was made in April, 1808, but Bonaparte did not value an American alliance so highly as the men who offered it. His business was war, and he did not believe that an American alliance could be of much service to him. This is why two years were suffered to elapse before any notice was taken of the American minister's offer. Although the French response was merely a contingent re-

peal of the decrees, depending on the repeal of the orders-in-council, the government of the United States at once treated it as absolute, and, while strictly enforcing the Non-Importation Act against British ships, permitted French men-of-war and merchantmen to enter its harbours freely; it also required the British government to revoke the orders-in-council. That government demanded the production of the instrument by which the Berlin and Milan decrees were revoked, but it was not until May 21st, 1812, that such a document was produced and then it was found to bear date of April 28th, 1811, or nearly eight months after the time when it was first announced that the decrees were revoked. This instrument expressly declared that these French decrees were repealed in consequence of the American Congress having by an Act of March 1st, 1811, provided that British ships and merchandise should be excluded from the ports of the United States. This was a clear proof that an understanding which was hostile to British interests existed between that country and France. Still when this French document was produced, the British government, to quote the language of the manifesto issued by the Prince Regent, "desirous of reverting if possible to the ancient and accustomed principles of Maritime War, determined on revoking, conditionally, the orders-in-council." It was not until May 21st, 1812, that the British government was furnished by the American minister in London with a copy of the document, and, on the twenty-third of June, a declaration from the Prince Regent in council was published absolutely revoking all orders so far as they applied to the United States. Had the government of that country been animated by a sincere desire for peace this action would have brought the War of 1812 to a sudden end.

In May, 1811, an encounter took place on the high seas between a British war vessel and an American frigate which showed the belligerent disposition which animated the navy of the United States. The United States frigate *President*, 44 guns, carrying the broad pennant of Commodore Rodgers, while cruising off Cape Henry sighted the British corvette

Little Belt, 20 guns, Captain A. B. Bingham, which was cruising northwards in search of the frigate *Guerrière*. The *President* discovered the British vessel about noon, and immediately gave chase, but it was dark before the American frigate drew alongside. Captain Bingham hailed the *President* asking, "What ship is that?" but the only reply he received was a repetition of his own question. The *President* then fired a broadside which the *Little Belt* immediately returned. An action ensued which lasted about forty-five minutes, when the big American ship sheered off. At dawn the *President* bore down again and Rodgers sent an officer on board the *Little Belt* with profuse apologies and offers of assistance which were declined. As the United States government was at that time at peace with the whole world, it is clear that Rodgers' attack on the *Little Belt* was merely the act of a sea bully who wished to stand well with his countrymen at a cheap rate by attacking a ship of less than one-fourth his own strength. The *Little Belt* bore away for Halifax, while Rodgers returned to New York to receive the congratulations of his friends.

When Congress met in November, 1811, its tone was warlike. The president, Mr. Madison, sounded the keynote by a belligerent message, and the committee on foreign relations presented a report which was a comprehensive indictment of Great Britain for almost every kind of political crime. A tremendous amount of fervid eloquence was employed to fire the national heart to the point of going to war, Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun being among the loudest and most violent in their advocacy of extreme measures. John Randolph of Virginia, Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts and all the leaders of the Federal party were against a war with England, and opposed all proposals to that end, but they were entirely outnumbered in Congress, and measures looking towards a declaration of war were rapidly passed. Additional regulars to the number of twenty-five thousand men were ordered to be enlisted, the calling out of one hundred thousand militia was authorized, and appropriations were made for large purchases

of arms and ammunition. The president was authorized to call upon the governors of the several states, requiring each state to furnish its quota of this militia force. Provision was also made for the enlistment of a large body of volunteers. These bills were passed in January, 1812, and it was expected that at least seventy thousand men would be ready to take the field in the spring and invade Canada.

The Federal government was encouraged in its truculent course by some of the state legislatures—those of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Georgia, Kentucky and Ohio having passed resolutions in favour of war with Great Britain. The Massachusetts House of Representatives, in its reply to the annual message of the governor, denounced Great Britain as “a piratical state.” Patriotism was a very plentiful commodity in the United States at that time, if the report of the committee on foreign relations is to be believed. It stated that the patriotic fire of the Revolution still lived in the American breast “with a holy and inextinguishable flame.” This “holy flame” developed itself mainly in an intense desire to possess Canada, and it was stimulated by the thought that a favourable time had arrived to strike a deadly blow against Great Britain. It was known that Napoleon was preparing to invade Russia with an immense army and no one in the United States doubted his success. An alliance with so powerful a ruler appeared to these American patriots to be very desirable, and they fully believed that Canada was ready to rise and throw off its allegiance to the British crown as soon as an American army appeared on its frontier. Dr. Eustis, the United States secretary of war, in one of his speeches gave expression to this sentiment when he said: “We can take the Canadas without soldiers; we have only to send officers into the provinces and the people, disaffected towards their own government, will rally round our standard.”

The Honourable Henry Clay, who had always been most violent in his animosity against Great Britain, said on the floors of Congress: “It is absurd to suppose that we will not succeed in our enterprise against the enemy’s provinces. We

have the Canadas as much under our command as Great Britain has the ocean, and the way to conquer her on the ocean is to drive her from the land. I am not for stopping at Quebec or anywhere else, but I would take the whole continent from them, and ask them no favours. Her fleets cannot then rendez-vous at Halifax as now; and, having no place of resort in the north, cannot infest our coast as they have lately done. It is as easy to conquer them on the land as their whole navy would conquer ours on the ocean. We must take the continent from them. I wish never to see peace till we do. God has given us the power and the means; we are to blame if we do not use them."

It was with such aspirations and hopes as these that the government and people of the United States entered upon the War of 1812.

CHAPTER II

WAR DECLARED BY PRESIDENT MADISON

ALTHOUGH, as has been seen, war had been resolved upon by the Congress of the United States as early as the autumn of 1811, there was still some formal business to be done before it could be actually declared. The cry for war on the part of the people seemed to be loud, yet there were many who were strongly opposed to such a measure, while others, when they found their country on the eve of a contest, felt great hesitancy as to the proper course to pursue. Among these doubters was no less a personage than President Madison himself, who, notwithstanding his belligerent message to Congress, had never been in favour of resorting to hostilities if they could be avoided. But he was in the hands of men more powerful than himself. On March 2nd, 1812, he was waited upon by a number of the leading men of the Democratic party and plainly told that the only terms upon which he could obtain re-nomination for the presidency was by consenting to a declaration of war against Great Britain. In their opinion such a measure was necessary to the success of the party, although at this day it does not seem quite clear how the Democrats could be defeated because they acquiesced in the pacific policy which the Federalists advocated. Madison, coerced by the threats of his political friends, yielded against the dictates of his better judgment, and thereby brought upon his country three years of war which gave not one compensating advantage. On the first of April he sent a confidential message to Congress recommending the laying of an embargo on all shipping for sixty days, as a preliminary to a declaration of war against Great Britain. A bill to this effect was, by the



JAMES MADISON

The President of the United States who declared war against Great Britain.

aid of the previous question, carried in the House of Representatives the same evening by a vote of seventy to forty-one. Next day it was sent to the Senate which took it up under a suspension of the rules and passed it with an amendment extending the time of the embargo to ninety days. This amendment was concurred in by the House, and the bill became law on the fourth of April. The Embargo Act was followed by another measure forbidding all importations by land, whether of goods or specie. These enactments were followed by vigorous preparations for war both by land and sea, by strengthening the army and navy and making large dépôts and magazines for the use of the troops. On the first of June, Mr. Madison, yielding once more to the pressure put upon him by a committee of Democrats headed by Henry Clay, sent another confidential message to Congress recapitulating a number of reasons why, in his opinion, war should be declared, and leaving the decision of the question in the hands of Congress. Acting on this the House of Representatives on the fourth of June, by a vote of seventy-nine to forty-nine, passed a bill declaring war against Great Britain. This bill was discussed by the Senate for twelve days and was finally passed in that body on the seventeenth of June by a vote of nineteen to thirteen. It was then sent back to the House on the eighteenth for concurrence in certain amendments; the same day it received the signature of the president, and on the following day he issued a proclamation declaring war between the two countries.

While the debate on the war measure was going on in the Senate, although the deliberations of that body were supposed to be secret, enough leaked out to make the public aware of what the result was likely to be. In the south and west the war was popular, but in the New England states the reverse was the case. There the news that war had been declared was received with marked tokens of disfavour. The governors of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut refused to comply with the requisitions for militia made upon them by the president, taking the ground that such a demand could

only be made in case of an actual invasion. The legislature of New Jersey denounced the war as "inexpedient, ill-timed and dangerously impolitic." The Maryland House of Delegates passed resolutions commending the action of the New England governors. But such demonstrations only served to exasperate the promoters of the war, the would-be-conquerors of Canada. The *Federal Republic*, a newspaper published in Baltimore which ventured to oppose the war, had its office sacked by the mob, and its proprietors were in peril of their lives. An attempt to re-establish the paper a few weeks later resulted in a fearful riot in which General Lingan, an aged hero of the Revolution, was killed; and General Henry Lee, a very distinguished Revolutionary soldier, was so cruelly maimed that he never recovered from his injuries. This act of the Baltimore rabble became highly important in a national sense, for it deprived the United States of the services of probably the only officer of the Revolution who was, in 1812, capable of successfully leading an army. It also emphasized in a marked degree the partisan and sectional character of the war.

The two Canadian provinces, which were the prizes the Americans proposed to secure as the reward of their valour, had a frontier of nearly two thousand miles in extent, reaching from Lake Superior to the New Brunswick boundary, which was liable to be attacked at any point by an invading army from the United States. Their population was, in 1812, less than four hundred thousand souls, and of this number western Canada contained about eighty thousand. The three hundred thousand inhabitants of eastern Canada were mostly of French origin, descended from the peasantry left in the country when it was surrendered to England by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The French were sometimes restive under British rule, and it was believed by the United States politicians that they would welcome an invading army of Americans and become Republicans. The small British minority in eastern Canada consisted largely of exiled Loyalists and their children from whom even the most sanguine American,

if in the possession of his proper senses, could hardly expect a very cordial reception. The population of Upper Canada was made up of the descendants of exiled Loyalists and disbanded soldiers, together with immigrants from the British Isles and the United States. The British immigrants were naturally attached to their own flag and their own form of government, but not more so than the Loyalists who had suffered from American injustice. In both these classes the invaders of Canada could only expect to find resolute enemies; yet such was the delusion of American politicians, that they actually expected both British immigrants and Loyalists to rise and renounce their allegiance the moment an American force appeared on the frontier. It was a vain hope, and the lesson taught the presumptuous invaders was one that has not been forgotten even at the present day. The American immigrants who came to Upper Canada after the Loyalist immigration were not numerous enough to affect the efficient defence of the province, even had they been disposed to do so; but there is no reason to believe that the majority of them were otherwise than hearty in their support of the common cause.

Yet, after making all allowance for the loyalty and fortitude of the people of Canada, it is impossible not to feel surprised at the combination of skill, courage and good fortune which enabled the country to make a successful defence against its invaders. Against the few hundred thousand inhabitants of Canada were arrayed the eight millions of the United States, forming a population that had read a great deal of the glories of war and desired to experience some of them in their own persons. The British Isles then had a population of eighteen millions, but they were three thousand miles away, and, with one brief interval of peace, had for nineteen years been at war with France, spending hundreds of millions of pounds in maintaining the conflict, and in subsidizing other nations in order to enable their armies to keep the field. In 1812 the British had a land force of three hundred thousand men, but the area of conflict was so wide that it was impossible to spare

many troops for the defence of Canada, even had a war been anticipated. All through the summer of that year, the orders-in-council having been revoked, the British government rested secure in the belief that there would be no war, and it is marvellous that during this critical period Canada was not over-run and wholly lost to the British crown. The total number of regulars in Canada when war was declared was but four thousand four hundred and fifty, and of these there were only one thousand four hundred and fifty in the Upper Province with a frontier of thirteen hundred miles to defend against an active and enterprising enemy. These consisted of nine hundred men of the 41st Regiment; two hundred and fifty of the 10th Royal Veteran Battalion; two hundred and fifty of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and fifty men of the Royal Artillery. In Lower Canada were the first battalions of the 8th, the 49th, and 100th Regiments, a small detachment of artillery and the Canadian and Glengarry Fencibles, the two latter being provincial corps. The only reinforcements which arrived during the summer of 1812 were the 1st Regiment or Royal Scots from the West Indies, the 103rd Regiment, and a few recruits for the other regiments from England, but these reinforcements did not reach Canada in time to take part in any of the important operations of that year. The defence of the country against a powerful invading enemy had therefore to be entrusted to the few regulars that were in Canada prior to the declaration of war, and to the Canadian militia.

The preparations for the invasion of Canada were made on a very ample scale. Congress had provided for the maintenance of a regular army of thirty-six thousand seven hundred men, in addition to fifty thousand volunteers, and to these were to be added one hundred thousand militia to be furnished by the several states. A loan of \$11,000,000 was authorized, and this it was expected would pay the war expenses for the first year, but, as nearly \$5,000,000 of this loan was not subscribed for and the war expenditure was more than double what had been anticipated, the difference

had to be made up by an issue of treasury notes, an expedient which brought financial disaster on the country at a later day. Canada was to be invaded at three points, one army being directed by way of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain against Montreal; a second against the Niagara frontier; and a third against the extreme end of the western peninsula at Detroit. Major-General Dearborn, who had the general direction of military operations on the northern frontier, commanded the Plattsburg army in person, and is said to have received the most positive instructions to winter at Montreal. The Niagara army which was six thousand three hundred strong was under the command of Major-General Stephen Van Rensselaer of New York. The Detroit army was commanded by Brigadier-General Hull, a veteran of the Revolutionary War. This last army, which was the first to take the field, was not included in the command of General Dearborn, but was under the immediate direction of Dr. Eustis, the secretary of war, the man who was so confident of taking Canada without soldiers.

It was quite in keeping with the spirit which had marked the conduct of the whole quarrel with England that Congress before adjourning should have requested the president to recommend a day of humiliation and prayer to be observed by the people of the United States for the purpose of publicly invoking the blessing of God on their cause. President Madison appointed the twentieth of August for this purpose. On that day all good citizens of the United States were expected to approach the awful presence of the Almighty Ruler of the universe with a petition on their lips that He would strengthen their armies to enable them to invade and slay the peaceful people of Canada; that He would graciously assist them to desolate Canadian homes, to make widows of the wives, and orphans of the children of Canada, and to bring all the manifold horrors of war on a people who had never injured them by word or deed. If the Almighty had not been merciful as well as just, these impious petitions would have withered the lips of those who uttered them, but before

they were made they had been denied, and one American army with its general was a prisoner on the soil of Canada. Had this fact been known to the New England ministers who took advantage of the day to denounce the war and its authors from their pulpits, it would have given point to their utterances and strength to their eloquence. The words of William Ellery Channing on that occasion, spoken from his own pulpit in Boston when he declared the war to be "an unjustifiable and ruinous war" . . . "a war that is leading us down to poverty, vice and slavery," were so suitable to the day, and so true as to be almost prophetic. A war undertaken under false pretences, for the benefit not of the nation but of party, and aimed against the peace, liberty and happiness of a friendly people could not end otherwise than in disaster.

The governor-general of Canada when the war broke out was Sir George Prevost, an officer of Swiss origin who had risen to high rank in the British service, and who, in consequence of his conciliatory disposition and kindly manners had proved an acceptable civil governor. But as a military leader, as the sequel showed, he was an utter failure, and nearly every disaster which the British suffered during the war is to be attributed to his weakness or incompetency. Canada needed at that time a bold and active commander-in-chief, but Sir George Prevost was neither active nor bold, and during the whole period of the war he hung like a dead weight on more enterprising officers who commanded the armies in Canada. The single claim that Sir George Prevost has upon the respect of the Canadians of the present day rests on the fact that he succeeded in winning the confidence of the French people of Lower Canada. The legislature of that province when it met in February, 1812, was not backward in adopting his advice to take defensive measures in view of an anticipated invasion. A militia bill was passed which authorized the governor to embody two thousand unmarried men for three months in the year, and in case of invasion or imminent danger thereof, to retain them for one year, relieving one-half of the number embodied by fresh drafts at the ex-

piration of that period. In the event of war the governor was authorized to embody the whole militia of the province should it become necessary. The grants for the support of the militia were on a most liberal scale when it is considered that the total revenue of the province for the previous year had been only £75,000. The sum of £62,000 was granted for



SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Governor-General of Canada when the United States declared war against Great Britain in June, 1812.

the purposes of militia and defence, of which £30,000 only were to be employed in case of war. The governor-general was thus placed in a position to command all the resources of Lower Canada in case of an invasion. On the twenty-eighth of May, when it was clear that war was imminent, he organized four battalions of militia under the authority of the

new Act. A regiment of Canadian *voltigeurs* (light infantry) was raised and placed under the command of Major De Salaberry of the 60th Regiment. Arrangements were made, with the concurrence of the legislature, for the issue of army bills to the amount of £250,000, redeemable with interest at the expiration of five years. The sedentary militia were drilled, and everything assumed a warlike aspect.

The president of Upper Canada was Major-General Isaac Brock, a man in almost every way a contrast to Sir George Prevost. He was active, vigilant and brave and had long foreseen the approaching conflict. His first care in the spring of 1812 was to strengthen the posts under his command. He reinforced Amherstburg on the Detroit frontier with a detachment of one hundred men of the 41st Regiment. He quietly made arrangements for calling out the militia of the province, and took such steps as his means permitted for their equipment.

While, as has been already seen, the war was promoted by the Democrats of the United States for the purpose of advancing their party interests at the coming presidential election, Dr. Eustis, the secretary of war, had some personal views of his own which prompted him to become its advocate. This gentleman had served as a regimental surgeon in the continental army of the Revolution, and afterwards settled in Boston where he became an active politician. After serving in Congress for some time he was appointed secretary of war by President Madison whose first term commenced in 1809. From the moment of Eustis's appointment he employed his best energies to bringing on a war with Great Britain, seeing in such a measure and the conquest of Canada, to which he believed it would lead, an easy method of seating himself, a successful war secretary, in the presidential chair. The glory of having added an enormous area to the territory of the United States would, in his opinion, be sufficient to give him an assurance of capturing so great a prize as the chief magistracy of the republic. But to prevent there being any possibility of doubt as to the person entitled to the glory of



MAJOR-GENERAL ISAAC BROCK

President of Upper Canada when the War of 1812 commenced. To his activity, vigilance and bravery is due the successful defence made during the early months of the war.

conquering Canada, he determined to direct an invasion against what he believed to be its weakest point, the Detroit frontier. It was for this reason that he assumed the entire control of the army under General Hull, and it illustrates in a marked degree the irony of fate that the very precautions which he took to isolate this army from the command of General Dearborn led to its capture and his own political ruin. Had the operations in the western peninsula been included in the armistice signed by Dearborn on the ninth of August, the British flag would not have been flying over Detroit seven days later.

There was, however, a great deal of the wisdom of the serpent in the manner in which the American war secretary proceeded to open the campaign against Canada. In the early part of the year Governor Hull of Michigan was called to Washington for the purpose of consulting with Eustis as to the proposed invasion of Canada by way of Detroit. Hull was rather averse to leading such a campaign unless the control of Lake Erie could first be secured, but he was overborne by the eloquence and the promises of the war secretary, and yielded to his wishes, accepting a commission as brigadier-general and the command of the proposed army of invasion, which was to be composed of the militia and volunteers of Ohio and Michigan, together with a regiment of the regular army. In pursuance of this arrangement a requisition was made upon Governor Meigs of Ohio for twelve hundred militia to be drilled and ready to march to Detroit. Ohio at that time had a population of three hundred and fifty thousand persons, or four times as many as the whole of Upper Canada, and their warlike zeal was so great that far more than the required number responded to the call of Governor Meigs. They assembled at Dayton about the end of April and spent nearly a month in preparations for the campaign. These included their organization into three regiments and the election of officers. They were presently joined by three companies of Ohio volunteers, and on the twenty-fifth of May Governor Hull made his appearance and took command of

the army. This date is important for it shows that an American brigadier-general was in command of an army intended for the invasion of Canada seven days before the president's message suggesting a declaration of war was sent to Congress, and nearly four weeks before war was actually declared. Nor



GENERAL WILLIAM HULL

From 'Richardson's War of 1812,' by permission of the publishers.

must it be forgotten that this expedition had been secretly prepared, and that no one in Canada could learn, by any of the ordinary channels of information, of the attack which menaced his country.

The formal transfer of the command of the Ohio militia and volunteers from Governor Meigs to Governor Hull was accompanied by a grand display of eloquence. If the result of the war could have been decided by words the fate of Canada would have been sealed that day, for there were orations by Governor Meigs, General Hull and Colonel Lewis Cass, then a young lawyer without military experience who had been elected to the command of the 3rd Ohio Regiment. There was a vast amount of patriotic enthusiasm on the occasion, as all the speakers announced their intention to conquer Canada or die in the attempt; but there was far more when a few days later the men of Ohio were joined by the 4th Regiment of regulars under Lieutenant-Colonel James Miller. They were escorted into camp by the three Ohio regiments and passed under a triumphal arch of evergreens decked with flowers, and inscribed with the words "TIPPECANOE—GLORY." General Hull immediately issued a complimentary order in which he expressed his belief, "that there will be no other contention in this army but who will most excel in discipline and bravery." The reader will be able to judge by the sequel how far this belief was well founded.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL HULL INVADES CANADA

IT was on the twelfth of June that Hull's army was united by the junction of the regulars under Colonel Miller, and on the following day it commenced its march through the wilderness towards the Detroit frontier. As Hull advanced he built blockhouses along his line of march to serve for dépôts and rallying points for his force in the event of a retreat. At Blanchard's Fork, on the Miami River, a stockaded fort which was named Fort Findlay, was erected, and here Hull received a despatch on the twenty-fourth of June from the war department, directing him to hasten to Detroit and await further orders. This despatch was dated the nineteenth of June, the same day that war was declared, but it made no mention of that fact. Hull hastened forward and halted at the rapids of the Miami, there reaching navigable water. For the purpose of relieving his baggage-animals of a part of their burden, he placed his own baggage and that of most of his officers, the hospital stores, intrenching tools, the general orders of the army and the complete muster rolls of his force, on the schooner *Cuyahoga* to be carried to Detroit. The wives of several of his officers, and thirty soldiers were also embarked on the schooner. This action, as it turned out, had a very important effect on the issue of the campaign. The *Cuyahoga* reached Miami Bay, where Toledo now stands, on the evening of the first of July, and on the same day Hull's army moved towards Detroit through a fine open country by way of Frenchtown on the river Raisin. Here, on the second of July, Hull was overtaken by a courier with a despatch from the war department informing him that war had been declared

against Great Britain and ordering him to proceed to Detroit with all possible expedition.

It has already been pointed out that war had been declared on the nineteenth of June, and that the intention of the American secretary of war was to have Canada invaded and the territory opposite Detroit occupied before the news of the declaration of war reached Sir George Prevost or Major-General Brock. But this intention was defeated by the difficulty of the march through the wilderness, and by the vigilance of the friends of the British government in New York city. Sir George Prevost received information of the declaration of war on the twenty-fourth of June by an express from New York to the North-West Fur Company, which left that city on the twentieth, the day when intelligence of the declaration of war reached it. On the twenty-fifth Sir George Prevost sent a courier with a letter to Brock who was then at York, but it did not reach him until the third day of July when he was at Fort George on the Niagara frontier. Brock had been informed of the war, by an express from New York, as early as the twenty-seventh of June. It appears that the intelligence of the declaration of war which reached Brock was brought by a messenger sent by John Jacob Astor to Thomas Clark of Niagara Falls. Thus the private interest of an American citizen, who had a large trade in Canada, served the purpose of putting the president of Upper Canada on his guard against the expected invasion. It is a curious circumstance that this messenger, who was a native of Albany, told his countrymen on the way that he was carrying the news of the war to Fort Niagara, and he obtained, in consequence, every facility from them that money and horses could afford. It is equally remarkable that the official intimation of the war, from the British minister at Washington, was so much delayed that it did not reach Quebec until some weeks had elapsed. It was fortunate for Canada that in this crisis she had not to rely on official notices, for at that time every day was precious, and the fate of the provinces hung in the balance. Colonel St. George, who commanded the British forces at

Malden on the Detroit River, received notice of the declaration of war on the thirtieth of June, two days before it reached General Hull; and Captain Roberts, who was in command of the British post on the Island of St. Joseph at the head of Lake Huron, was notified by letter on the eighth of July. It is stated in American histories that the letters to Colonel St. George and Captain Roberts were in envelopes franked by the American secretary of the treasury, Mr. Gallatin, but how this happened remains to this day a mystery. It was certainly remarkable that the postal facilities of the enemy should thus have been utilized for the purpose of assisting Canada to defend itself against an American invasion.

The promptitude with which the news of the war reached the Canadian frontier led to two events which exercised the greatest possible influence on the result of the campaign. On the morning of the second of July, while the *Cuyahoga* with all Hull's baggage was sailing past Malden, unconscious of danger, she was brought to by a gun from the British fort. The British armed-vessel *Hunter* went alongside of her, and the schooner and her cargo became a prize. Thus the most complete information in regard to Hull's army, its numbers and character, fell into the hands of the British, as well as a great variety of stores which were necessary for his operations in the campaign against Canada.

Still more important effects were produced by the early conveyance of the news of the war to Captain Roberts who commanded the fort at St. Joseph. This fort, which was on the Island of St. Joseph in the straits between Lake Huron and Lake Superior, had been established by Lord Dorchester in 1795. It was intended to serve as a check on the American fort Mackinac, which was forty-seven miles distant, on an island of the same name lying in the strait between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. On the fifteenth of July Roberts received letters by express from General Brock with orders to adopt the most prudent measures either for offence or defence which circumstances might point out. Roberts had received information that he was likely to be attacked at St.

Joseph, and he knew that his post there was quite indefensible, so he determined to lose no time in becoming the aggressor by taking the American fort at Mackinac. On the sixteenth he embarked with forty-five officers and men of the 16th Royal Veteran Battalion, one hundred and eighty Canadians, three hundred and ninety-three Indians and two



MACKINAC TO-DAY—THE FORT

iron 6-pounders, on his hazardous expedition. This force reached Mackinac on the following morning. A summons was immediately sent in, and Fort Mackinac with seven pieces of cannon and sixty-one officers and men of the United States army surrendered without the shedding of a single drop of blood. Captain Roberts was so prompt in his movements, and so judicious in the measures he adopted, that it was impossible for the Americans to make any successful resistance, for his men were on the heights which commanded the fort with a gun in position almost before the enemy had received notice of their presence. This capture of the very important post of Mackinac was of far more consequence to the British cause than would be apparent to the casual reader,

for it fixed the loyalty of the Indians, and showed them which side they should take in the coming struggle, and it left Detroit open to the attacks of the savages from the northern lakes. If Mackinac had been held by the American forces in 1812 the result of the campaign on the Detroit frontier might have been very different.

The very small force of regulars in Canada would have been still smaller at the commencement of the war had it not been for the steps taken by Sir George Prevost on the advice of Major-General Brock, early in the year, to increase the number of Canadian regiments. In February, 1812, the establishment of the existing provincial regiment, the Canadian Fencibles, was increased to eight hundred men, and a project



MACKINAC TO-DAY—FROM THE FORT

which had been proposed several years before for raising a regiment of infantry from the Glengarry settlers was carried into effect. Brock took an active part in promoting this work, but due credit should also be given to Sir George Prevost for his share in it. His correspondence with the British government shows that while this project of enlisting a regiment

of four hundred men was at first approved, it was afterwards discountenanced, and on March 30th, 1812, Lord Liverpool wrote Sir George Prevost ordering him to abandon the work of raising the Glengarry Regiment, the British government evidently then believing, and continuing to believe during most of the summer of 1812, that there would be no war. Fortunately for Canada the work of enlisting this regiment had advanced so far before Sir George Prevost received Lord Liverpool's letter that his orders could not be carried out, and on the twenty-sixth of May Sir George was able to report to Lord Liverpool that the Glengarry Regiment, completed to the number of four hundred men, was stationed at Three Rivers. The strength of this regiment was afterwards increased to six hundred and finally to eight hundred men, and it performed very efficient service during the war. It appears from a despatch written by Sir George Prevost to Lord Liverpool dated July 15th, 1812, that Glengarry did not supply all the men necessary to complete the regiment which bore that name, but that all the provinces had to be resorted to for recruits for it. In the same despatch he states that he had limited the numbers of the Canadian *voltigeurs* to three hundred, owing to the low state of the military chest.

Major-General Brock was at York, the capital of the province, when news was received of the declaration of war. At that time he had just been offered a company of farmers' sons with their trained horses for the equipment of a car brigade to be commanded by Captain Holcroft of the Royal Artillery. This offer was immediately accepted, and the flank companies of the militia of the Upper Province were called out, which made an addition of eight hundred men to his available force. Brock then hastened to Fort George on the Niagara frontier, and there established his military headquarters. He summoned the Indians of the Grand River to come to his assistance, and about one hundred of them responded. These prompt measures showed that the cause of Great Britain and of Canada was not likely to suffer from any lack of zeal or energy on the part of the president of Upper Canada.



FORT COLLIER BUILT ON DRUMMOND ISLAND AFTER MACKINAC WAS RESTORED TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1815

The car brigade was complete by the third of July. The Americans had gathered a considerable force on the east side of the Niagara River, but the Niagara frontier was lined with British troops and militia, and other preparations had been made to give the enemy a warm reception.

In the meantime Hull was advancing towards the Detroit frontier. Detroit at that time was a town of some one hundred and sixty houses, with a population of about eight hundred, the inhabitants being chiefly of French descent. On the hill in the rear of the village, about two hundred and fifty yards from the river, stood Fort Detroit. It was quadrangular in form with bastions on each corner, and covered about two acres of ground. Its embankments were nearly twenty feet in height, with a deep dry ditch, and it was surrounded by a double row of pickets. This fort before Hull's arrival was garrisoned by ninety-four officers and men of the United States army. Its position was one of considerable strength, but it was so placed that it did not command the river, and could not damage the armed vessels which the British had, at that time, in those waters. The town itself was surrounded by strong pickets fourteen feet high with loop-holes to shoot through.

The St. Clair River flows from Lake St. Clair, a few miles to the east of Detroit, to Lake Erie, its course being almost north and south. Near the junction of the river with Lake Erie on the United States side, is Brownstown; immediately opposite Brownstown were Amherstburg and Fort Malden; while on the Canadian side of the river nearly opposite Detroit was the village of Sandwich.

Hull's army reached Brownstown on the fourth of July, and spent that day in constructing a bridge across the Huron River. They marched early the next morning and that evening encamped at Springwells, at the lower end of the Detroit settlement, opposite Sandwich, where a small British force was stationed, and where fortifications were being erected. Fort Detroit and its surroundings were immediately occupied by Hull's army. These enthusiastic warriors



OPERATIONS ON THE DETROIT FRONTIER

amused themselves by cannonading the village of Sandwich, frightening the inhabitants out of their houses, and doing some slight damage. Hull had fully two thousand five hundred men with him when he reached Detroit.

The British forces on the Canadian side of the river consisted of one hundred men of the 41st Regiment, a few artillery, three hundred Canadian militia and about one hundred and fifty Indians, the whole under the command of Colonel St. George. The only fortification at that time was Fort Malden, which was a small work of four bastions flanking a dry ditch, with an interior defence of pickets with loop-holes for musketry. All the buildings in this fort were of wood roofed with shingles, and could easily have been destroyed by a few shells. As a defensive work against a civilized enemy with artillery, Fort Malden could be of no use whatever. A few of the British were stationed at Sandwich, and there Colonel St. George had commenced the erection of a two-gun battery, but it had not been completed when the Americans arrived at Detroit. Hull's army was so determined on the immediate invasion of Canada that his delay in taking this step made his soldiers almost mutinous. During his march through the wilderness he discovered that amateur soldiers, hastily levied and commanded by officers whom they had themselves elected, were not to be controlled with as much ease as disciplined veterans, because they had not been taught the first duty of a soldier, obedience. Hull delayed his invasion until he had received orders from Washington to advance; these orders having arrived on the evening of the seventh of July, he determined to invade Canada at once. The number of British troops at Sandwich was so small that there was no difficulty in crossing over, but Hull thought it necessary to resort to strategy, and sent his boats down the river on the evening of the eleventh to Springwells for the purpose of inducing the British to believe that an attack on Malden was contemplated. During the night the boats returned and the crossing was effected at a point about a mile and a half to the east of Detroit and some three miles from Sandwich. The few British that



AMHERSTBURG ON THE DETROIT RIVER

From a water-colour by Major Woolford a British Officer who visited it about 1822. By permission of the Toronto Public Library.

were at Sandwich retired down the river to the main body, so that no resistance whatever was offered. General Hull now issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of Canada which was intended to intimidate them and prevent them from defending their country against their enemies. This paper is said to have been written by Colonel Lewis Cass, one of Hull's officers, who afterwards became a public man of some note, and was as follows:—

“INHABITANTS OF CANADA:

“After thirty years of peace and prosperity the United States have been driven to arms. The injuries and aggressions, the insults and indignities of Great Britain have once more left them no alternative but manly resistance, or unconditional submission.

“The army under my command has invaded your country, and the standard of UNION now waves over the territory of Canada. To the peaceable, unoffending inhabitant, it brings neither danger nor difficulty. I come to *find* enemies, not to *make* them, I come to protect, not to injure you.

“Separated by an immense ocean, and an extensive wilderness from Great Britain, you have no participation in her councils, nor interest in her conduct. You have felt her tyranny, you have seen her injustice, but I do not ask you to avenge the one or redress the other. The United States are sufficiently powerful to afford you every security consistent with their rights, and your expectations. I tender you the invaluable blessings of civil, political and religious liberty, and their necessary result, individual and general prosperity—that liberty which gave decision to our councils and energy to our conduct in our struggle for independence, and which conducted us safely and triumphantly through the stormy period of the Revolution. That liberty which has raised us to an elevated rank among the nations of the world, and which has afforded us a greater measure of peace and security, of wealth and improvement, than ever fell to the lot of any people.

“In the name of my country and by the authority of my government, I promise protection to your persons, property and rights. Remain at your homes—pursue your peaceful and customary avocations—raise not your hands against your

brethren—many of your fathers fought for the freedom and independence we now enjoy. Being children, therefore, of the same family with us, and heirs to the same heritage, the arrival of an army of friends must be hailed by you with a cordial welcome. You will be emancipated from tyranny and oppression, and restored to the dignified station of freemen.

“Had I any doubt of eventual success, I might ask your assistance but I have not. I come prepared for every contingency. I have a force which will look down all opposition, and that force is but the vanguard of a much greater. If contrary to your own interests, and the just expectation of my country, you should take part in the approaching contest, you will be considered and treated as enemies, the horrors and calamities of war will stalk before you.

“If the barbarous and savage policy of Great Britain be pursued, and the savages are let loose to murder our citizens, and butcher our women and children, this war will be a war of extermination.

“The first stroke of the tomahawk, the first attempt with the scalping knife, will be the signal of one indiscriminate scene of desolation. No white man found fighting by the side of an Indian will be taken prisoner—instant destruction will be his lot. If the dictates of reason, duty, justice and humanity, cannot prevent the employment of a force which respects no rights, and knows no wrong, it will be prevented by a severe and relentless system of retaliation.

“I doubt not your courage and firmness; I will not doubt your attachment to liberty. If you tender your services voluntarily, they will be accepted readily.

“The United States offers you peace, liberty, and security. Your choice lies between these and war, slavery and destruction. Choose then, but choose wisely; and may He who knows the justice of the cause, and who holds in His hands the fate of nations, guide you to a result the most compatible with your rights and interests, your peace and prosperity.

“W. HULL.

“By the General, A. F. HULL,

“Captain 13th Regiment, U. S. Infantry and Aide-de-Camp.

“HEAD-QUARTERS, SANDWICH, July 12th, 1812.”

Major-General Brock was at Fort George on the Niagara frontier, when, on the twentieth of July, he received information of Hull's invasion and a copy of his proclamation. He instantly issued a counter proclamation which is a marvel of manly eloquence and which produced a powerful effect on the minds of all who read it.

PROCLAMATION

"The unprovoked declaration of war, by the United States of America, against the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and its dependencies, has been followed by the actual invasion of this province in a remote frontier of the western district, by a detachment of the armed forces of the United States. The officer commanding that detachment has thought proper to invite His Majesty's subjects not merely to a quiet and unresisting submission, but insults them with a call to seek voluntarily the protection of his government. Without condescending to repeat the illiberal epithets bestowed in this appeal of the American commander to the people of Upper Canada on the administration of His Majesty, every inhabitant of the province is desired to seek the confutation of such indecent slander, in the review of his own particular circumstances. Where is the Canadian subject who can truly affirm to himself that he has been injured by the government in his person, his liberty or his property? Where is to be found in any part of the world, a growth so rapid in wealth and prosperity, as this colony exhibits? Settled not thirty years by a band of veterans, exiled from their former possessions on account of their loyalty, not a descendant of these brave people is to be found who, under the fostering liberality of their sovereign, has not acquired a property and means of enjoyment superior to what were possessed by their ancestors. This unequalled prosperity could not have been attained by the utmost liberality of the government, or the persevering industry of the people, had not the maritime power of the mother country secured to its colonies a safe access to every market where the produce of their labour was in demand.

"The unavoidable and immediate consequence of a separation from Great Britain must be the loss of this inestimable

advantage; and what is offered you in exchange? To become territory of the United States and share with them that exclusion from the ocean which the policy of their present government enforces—you are not even flattered with a participation of their boasted independence, and it is but too obvious that once exchanged from the powerful protection of the United Kingdom, you must be re-annexed to the dominion of France, from which the province of Canada was wrested by the arms of Great Britain, at a vast expense of blood and treasure, from no other motive but to *relieve* her ungrateful people from a cruel neighbour. This restitution of Canada to the empire of France was the stipulated reward for the aid afforded to the revolted colonies, now the United States; the debt is still due, and there can be no doubt but the pledge has been renewed as a consideration for commercial advantages, or rather for an expected relaxation in the tyranny of France over the commercial world.—Are you prepared, inhabitants of Upper Canada, to become willing subjects, or rather slaves, to the despot who rules the nations of Europe with a rod of iron?—If not, arise in a body, and exert your energies, coöperate cordially with the King's regular forces to repel the invader, and do not give cause to your children, when groaning under the oppression of a foreign master, to reproach you with having too easily parted with the richest inheritance of this earth,—a participation in the name, character and freedom of Britons.

“The same spirit of justice, which will make every reasonable allowance for the unsuccessful efforts of zeal and loyalty, will not fail to punish the defalcation of principle: every Canadian freeholder is, by deliberate choice, bound by the most solemn oaths to defend the monarchy as well as his own property; to shrink from that engagement is a treason not to be forgiven: let no man suppose that if in this unexpected struggle, His Majesty's arms should be compelled to yield to an overwhelming force, that the province will be eventually abandoned; the endeared relation of its first settlers, the intrinsic value of its commerce, and the pretensions of its powerful rival to repossess the Canadas, are pledges that no peace will be established between the United States and Great Britain and Ireland, of which the restoration of these provinces does not make the most prominent condition.

"Be not dismayed at the unjustifiable threat of the commander of the enemy's forces to refuse quarter should an Indian appear in the ranks. The brave bands of natives which inhabit this colony were, like His Majesty's subjects, punished for their zeal and fidelity by the loss of their possessions in the late colonies, and rewarded by His Majesty with lands of superior quality in this province; the faith of the British government has never yet been violated, they feel that the soil they inherit is to them and their posterity protected from the base arts so frequently devised to overreach their simplicity.

"By what new principle are they to be prevented from defending their property? If their warfare, from being different from that of the white people, is more terrific to the enemy, let him retrace his steps—they seek him not—and cannot expect to find women and children in an invading army; but they are men, and have equal rights with all other men to defend themselves and their property when invaded, more especially when they find in the enemy's camp a ferocious and mortal foe using the same warfare which the American commander affects to reprobate.

"This inconsistent and unjustifiable threat of refusing quarter for such a cause as being found in arms with a brother sufferer in defence of invaded rights, must be exercised with the certain assurance of retaliation, not only in the limited operations of war in this part of the King's dominions but in every quarter of the globe, for the national character of Britain is not less distinguished for humanity than strict retributive justice, which will consider the execution of this inhuman threat as deliberate murder, for which every subject of the offending power must make expiation.

"ISAAC BROCK,

"Major-General and President.

"HEAD-QUARTERS, FORT GEORGE, July 22nd, 1812.

"By order of His Honour the President,

"J. B. GLEGG, Capt. A.D.C.

"GOD SAVE THE KING."

General Brock sent Colonel Procter of the 41st Regiment to assume command of Amherstburg with such reinforce-

ments as he could spare, and then proceeded to York to meet the legislature of Upper Canada which assembled in special session on the twenty-seventh of July. His opening speech to that body was well calculated to awaken in the hearts of its members those patriotic feelings which are seldom absent from the breasts of Canadians. He said:—

“When invaded by an enemy whose avowed object is the entire conquest of the province, the voice of loyalty, as well as of interest, calls aloud to every person in the sphere in which he is placed to defend his country. Our militia have heard the voice and have obeyed it. They have evinced by the promptitude and loyalty of their conduct that they are worthy of the King whom they serve, and of the constitution which they enjoy; and it affords me particular satisfaction that, while I address you as legislators, I speak to men who, in the day of danger, will be ready to assist not only with their counsel, but with their arms.

“We are engaged in an awful and eventful contest. By unanimity and despatch in our Councils, and by vigour in our operations, we may teach the enemy this lesson, that a country defended by free men, enthusiastically devoted to the cause of their King and constitution, cannot be conquered.”

The House of Assembly thus addressed contained some members who were not in harmony with the general feeling of loyalty which prevailed throughout the province, and who endeavoured to obstruct the progress of urgent business by dilatory methods. After a session which lasted only nine days, and during which two Acts were passed providing for the defence of the province, the legislature was prorogued and Brock left free to look after the military operations which demanded his personal attention. The closing Act of the legislature was to issue a royal address to the inhabitants of Upper Canada, the tone of which leaves nothing to be desired. The concluding paragraphs of this spirited document are as follows:—

“Already have we the joy to remark that the spirit of loyalty has burst forth in all its ancient splendour. The

militia in all parts of this province have volunteered their services with acclamation, and displayed a degree of energy worthy of the British name. When men are called upon to defend everything they call precious—their wives and children, their friends and possessions—they ought to be inspired with the noblest resolutions, and they will not easily be frightened by menaces or conquered by force; and beholding, as we do, the flame of patriotism burning from one end of the Canadas to another, we cannot but entertain the most pleasing anticipations.

“Our enemies have indeed said that they could subdue this country by proclamation; but it is our part to prove to them that they are sadly mistaken, that the population is determinedly hostile to them, and that the few who might be otherwise inclined will find it their safety to be faithful.

“Innumerable attempts will be made by falsehood to detach you from your allegiance, for our enemies, in imitation of their European master, trust more to treachery than to force; and they will, no doubt make use of many of those lies which, unfortunately for the virtuous part of these states and the peace and happiness of the world, had too much success during the American rebellion. They will tell you that they are come to give you freedom. Yes, the base slaves of the most contemptible faction that ever distracted the affairs of any nation, the minions of the very sycophants who lick the dust from the feet of Bonaparte, will tell you that they are come to communicate the blessing of liberty to this province; but you have only to look to your own situation to put such hypocrites to confusion.

“Trusting more to treachery than to open hostility, our enemies have already spread their emissaries through the country to seduce our fellow-subjects from their allegiance by promises as false as the principles on which they are founded. A law has been enacted for the speedy detection of such emissaries, and for their condign punishment on conviction.

“Remember that, when you go forth to the combat, you fight not for yourselves alone, but for the whole world. You are defeating the most formidable conspiracy against the civilization of man that was ever contrived, a conspiracy threatening greater barbarism and misery than followed the

downfall of the Roman empire; that now you have an opportunity of proving your attachment to the parent state, which contends for the relief of oppressed nations, the last pillar of true liberty and the last refuge of oppressed humanity.

“ALLAN MACLEAN,

“Speaker, Commons House of Assembly.

“August 5th, 1812.”

CHAPTER IV

SURRENDER OF HULL'S ARMY

GENERAL HULL having established himself on the soil of Canada at Sandwich, his army expected that he would make an immediate advance on Malden and clear the frontier of British troops. Fort Malden was indeed very weak and quite untenable if attacked with vigour by any considerable force, but, as the British had command of the river opposite, it could only be attacked by land by way of Sandwich. At the river Aux Canards, four miles above Malden, Colonel St. George established an outpost, and parties of Indians were thrown out in advance of it and scouted the banks of the Detroit River as far as Turkey Creek. On the fifteenth of July Colonel Cass made his appearance in the vicinity of the river Aux Canards with two hundred and eighty men. The bridge over this stream was defended by a company of the 41st Regiment, sixty militia and a party of Indians. The Indians were sent forward about a mile to entice the Americans to the bridge, but Cass and the bulk of his men had gone farther up the stream in order to find a place to cross and outflank the British, leaving a portion of the detachment in ambush in the woods. This concealed body of riflemen fired on the Indians killing one and wounding two others. The dead Indian was scalped by these soldiers of a general who had objected to the use of the scalping knife in a proclamation only three days old. The individual who thus imitated the Indian, whose warfare, to use the words of President Madison's message to Congress, is "distinguished by features peculiarly shocking to humanity," was a certain Captain William McCullough, who is described by an Ameri-

can historian as "one of the bravest and most devoted of his country's defenders." Captain McCullough, just three weeks later, was unfortunate enough to lose his own scalp in an encounter with the Indians at Brownstown. In his pocket was found a letter addressed to his wife in which his achievement was related, and in which he boasted that he tore the scalp from the head of the savage with his teeth. This trivial matter would be unworthy of mention but for the proof which it affords that savage deeds were by no means confined to the Indians. With what show of reason could a nation object to Indian methods of warfare when its soldiers not only adopted those methods themselves, but boasted of the fact, and carried home with them in triumph the bloody trophies torn from the heads of savages whose worst deeds they imitated?

Colonel Duncan McArthur of the 1st Ohio Regiment had been despatched up the Thames by General Hull to collect supplies, the day after Canada was invaded. He advanced as far as Moravian Town and commenced that career of plunder and rapine which gave him so evil a reputation during the war. The stores and dwellings of the inhabitants were robbed by these marauders, and about two hundred barrels of flour brought away in boats in addition to a vast quantity of other spoil. McArthur returned from his foray on the seventeenth, and on the two following days was engaged in skirmishing with the Indians near the Aux Canards. He had then three or four hundred men with him, and a couple of 6-pounders, but his advance against the bridge was checked by two pieces of artillery which the British had upon it, and he was forced to retreat. The invaders marched back to camp in very bad humour with themselves and their generals. Two privates of the 41st Regiment, who formed a small look-out party, were wounded and taken prisoners, but whether the Americans suffered any loss has not been ascertained.

McArthur, during the temporary absence of General Hull at Detroit, was left in command of the invading army and made up his mind to take Malden on his own account and

thereby win immortal renown. To effect this, however, it was necessary to pass the obstinate defenders of the Aux Canards bridge, and, as a direct attack seemed certain to fail, he resolved to go round it. A party of scouts under Captain McCullough was sent to look for a practicable passage for artillery above the bridge, but returned unsuccessful, and brought a report of a band of Indians having been seen between the Aux Canards and Turkey Creek. Major Denny with one hundred and twenty militia of the 1st Ohio Regiment was sent out to drive them away on the morning of the twenty-fifth, but failed most lamentably in his enterprise. His detachment fell into an ambuscade formed by twenty-two Indians and fled in great confusion with a loss of six killed and two wounded. The militia threw away their arms, accoutrements and haversacks, and were pursued for about three miles, until they met with reinforcements. They then returned to camp thinking that war was not quite so much of a holiday amusement as they had imagined. The army had been a fortnight in Canada and all they had to show for it was one Indian scalp.

Immediately after the tidings of the invasion of Canada reached General Brock, that vigilant and active leader sent Captain Chambers of the 41st Regiment with a small detachment to the Thames for the purpose of gathering the militia and Indians in that district and advancing down the river towards Detroit. This officer experienced difficulties which delayed his advance and rendered it necessary for the general to send Colonel Procter to take command on the Detroit frontier. He arrived at Malden a few days after Major Denny's repulse, and, during the first week in August, was reinforced by sixty men of the 41st Regiment. The new commander soon made his presence known to the Americans in a very unpleasant manner. As the British had the command of Lake Erie and the river opposite Amherstburg, the only line of communication the Americans had with Ohio was by a road which passed along the west bank of the Detroit River through Brownstown to the river Raisin. This line

of communication Procter immediately cut with the aid of his Indians, leaving the American army at Sandwich in a state of complete isolation with the certainty of being compelled to surrender if its communications could not be restored. At this time General Hull received information that Captain Henry Brush, with two hundred and thirty Ohio volunteers, one hundred beef cattle and other supplies for the army and a mail, was at the river Raisin waiting for an escort to enable him to reach Detroit. A detachment of two



BLOCKHOUSE BUILT IN 1812 OPPOSITE AMHERSTBURG, ON BOIS BLANC ISLAND

hundred men was accordingly sent under Major Van Horne to escort Brush to the camp; they also had with them a mail which was destined for Ohio, and took their departure from Detroit in high spirits on the fourth of August. On the following day this body of troops, while approaching Brownstown, fell into an ambush of seventy Indians under Tecumseh and was compelled to retreat in great disorder, being pursued for several miles by the Indians. The mail was lost and seventeen of the Americans, including seven officers, were

killed and eight wounded, all of whom were left behind. It was on this occasion that the redoubtable Captain McCullough lost his scalp. The whole glory of this affair belongs to the Indians, who alone were engaged, and who had only one man killed. A perusal of the contents of the mail revealed the demoralized and mutinous condition of the American army, and hastened the catastrophe which was approaching.

The defeat at Brownstown brought to a sudden end those dreams of a speedy triumph in which the American general had been indulging. The question was not whether his army would occupy Malden but whether it could maintain itself at Sandwich. General Hull concluded that it could not, and on the evening of the seventh of August the order was given for the army to recross the river to Detroit. This order was executed in the course of the night and the following morning. The only American troops left on the soil of Canada were two hundred men under Major Denny who occupied a house belonging to one Gowris, which had been stockaded, together with some adjoining buildings. This post was called Fort Gowris but its occupation was simply a sham for the purpose of deceiving the soldiers and inducing them to believe that they still had a foothold in Canada, for Hull well knew that it could not be held. Thus had this formidable American army of invasion been driven from the soil of Canada without a single British soldier or Canadian militiaman being slain, or the exercise of any greater amount of pressure on the enemy than was involved in the placing of a few Indians across the line of General Hull's communications with Ohio. The forced evacuation of Canada was a terrible humiliation, not only to the army, but to the whole American people. The general who had "come prepared for every contingency," and the force which was to "look down all opposition," had been compelled to retire in a very disgraceful fashion. The few French-Canadians who, awed by the dreadful threats or seduced by the mighty promises of Hull, had placed themselves under his protection, now found themselves abandoned and left to the vengeance of the authorities whom they had

deserted. The loyal men who had taken the field at their country's call saw in Hull's retreat the best proof that their patriotic conduct had been wise as well as honourable. The conduct of Hull's army, while encamped in Canada, had been such that no credence could afterwards be given to the promises of any other general of the same nation. The Canadians who trusted Hull, instead of being protected in their "persons, property and rights," as he, in the name of his country and by the authority of his government, had solemnly promised they would be, had been systematically plundered and insulted by the mutinous host which he commanded. This poor old man, who after all was very much to be pitied, could in fact hardly protect himself from the Ohio rabble which called itself an army, but which had neither skill nor discipline nor any other single quality that an army should possess.

As the necessity for re-opening his communications with Ohio and escorting Brush to Detroit had become urgent, Colonel James Miller of the 4th U. S. infantry was sent out on the eighth of August with a strong detachment to effect that object. This force, which numbered six hundred men, embraced Miller's own regiment of regulars, part of the 1st U. S. Regiment, a few volunteers and a body of cavalry and artillery with two guns. Before Miller set out he harangued his troops and informed them that they were going to meet the enemy and to beat them. For the purpose of stimulating their courage he added: "You shall not disgrace yourselves nor me. Every man who shall leave the ranks or fall back without orders will be instantly put to death. I charge the officers to execute this order." On the afternoon of the following day Miller's force was approaching Maguaga, fourteen miles below Detroit, when the British were encountered. The detachment, which thus undertook to bar the way of the Americans, was under Captain Muir of the 41st Regiment, and consisted of seventy-five men of that regiment, sixty militia, one hundred and twenty-five Indians under Tecumseh and seventy Lake Indians under Caldwell. The Lake Indians,

who were to the right of the British, fled after a few volleys had been exchanged, so that the latter to avoid being out-flanked by an overwhelming force were obliged to retire about half a mile and take a fresh position. The Indians under Tecumseh maintained an obstinate conflict with Miller's troops and suffered considerable loss. The Americans did not attempt to approach the British in their new position, and Miller, thinking himself too weak to break through their line,



TECUMSEH

Who commanded the Indians with Brock on the occasion of the capture of Detroit in 1812.

sent back to Detroit for reinforcements. He was joined next day by Colonel McArthur with one hundred men who had come down in boats in which the wounded, who were numerous, were to be taken back. These boats on their return were captured by the boats of the *Queen Charlotte* and the *Hunter* under Lieutenant Rolette, the same energetic officer who took the

schooner containing Hull's baggage. No forward movement was made by the Americans that day, and in the afternoon they started to march back to Detroit, a weary and dispirited body of men, thoroughly disgusted with themselves, their general, and the campaign. Even Miller's threats of the bayonet had failed to drive the heroes of Tippecanoe against their enemies.

The American loss in the so-called battle of Maguaga was eighteen killed and fifty-seven wounded, if their own official accounts are to be relied on. The British lost three killed and twelve wounded, one of them, Lieutenant Sutherland of the 41st, mortally. Captain Muir was also wounded. The affair was a most humiliating repulse for the Americans, for nearly all the regulars they had on the frontier were engaged in it, and if they, with their cavalry and artillery, could not drive away a few British, Canadians, and Indians what could be expected of the militia alone? After this severe shock to national pride, the pretence of occupying any part of Canadian territory seemed to be quite unnecessary, therefore Fort Gowris at Sandwich was evacuated by Major Denny on the eleventh of August, and he and his men crossed over to Detroit. It was quite in keeping with the vandal-like character of the invasion that, before leaving the soil of Canada, Denny should have ordered the destruction of the house of Gowris which had given him shelter, and thereby prove that it was not necessary to go to an Indian camp to find men who disregarded the rules of civilized warfare.

While these events were occurring on the Detroit frontier, General Brock, now relieved of his legislative duties, was hastening forward reinforcements. The spirit in which he had been met by the people of Canada filled him with pride and hope, and his own exertions were commensurate with the difficulties he had to face. The militia of the province, imitating the example of those of the county of York, had volunteered to a man to serve in any part of western Canada. John Macdonell, the attorney-general, with a zeal worthy of all honour, took service on the general's staff as provincial aide-de-camp, and his conduct was but a type of that of the influ-

ential men of the province generally. To equip the militia for the field without money, supplies of food, clothing, shoes, or even arms, would have been absolutely impossible but for the spirit displayed by these gentlemen who stood by Brock in that trying hour. One company of private individuals, "The Niagara and Queenston Association," supplied him with several thousands of pounds sterling in bank notes, and with this he was placed in a position to equip his militia forces. Boats were gathered at Long Point on Lake Erie sufficient for the conveyance of three hundred men, and there with forty men of the 41st Regiment, and two hundred and sixty militia of the county of Norfolk, he embarked on the eighth of August. On the thirteenth he reached Amherstburg, after a rough passage, without an accident. Although it was nearly midnight when he arrived, he had an interview the same evening with Tecumseh, who was brought over from his encampment on Bois Blanc Island to meet him, and arrangements were made then for a council to be held the following day. This was attended by nearly one thousand Indians and was so satisfactory in every way that General Brock resolved upon such operations as would compel the enemy to fight in the open field or surrender.

The same day that Major Denny evacuated Sandwich the ground he left was occupied by a British detachment, and the erection of batteries was commenced under the direction of Captain Dixon of the Royal Engineers. The work was prosecuted with such diligence that on the fifteenth five guns were in position, all of which commanded the fort at Detroit. At noon that day Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell and Captain Glegg were sent by General Brock to Hull under a flag of truce to demand the immediate surrender of Detroit. Hull returned a bold answer stating that he was ready to meet any force the British might send against him, and refusing to comply with the demand. The same afternoon the British guns, which comprised one 18-pounder, two 12-pounders and two 5½-inch mortars, opened on Detroit with shot and shell and were replied to by seven 24-pounders from the other side



OFFICER OF LIGHT INFANTRY COMPANY, 41ST REGIMENT
With Brock at the Capture of Detroit.

of the river which, however, failed to do the British batteries the slightest injury, although the cannonade continued for several hours. During the night Tecumseh with Colonel Elliott, Captain McKee and six hundred Indians landed on the American shore two miles below Springwells and five from Detroit. There they remained in concealment until the following morning when General Brock and his white troops crossed over at Springwells.

The landing of the British was effected a little after daylight, the Americans offering no opposition whatever. As soon as they began to cross the river, the Indians moved forward and took up a position in the woods, about a mile and a half distant, on the British left. Brock's force consisted of thirty men of the Royal Artillery, two hundred and fifty of the 41st Regiment, fifty of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and four hundred Canadian militia, making with the Indians a grand total of one thousand three hundred and thirty. He had with him three 6-pounders and two 3-pounders, under the command of Lieutenant Troughton. General Brock's idea in crossing at that time was to advance towards the fort, take up a strong position, and, by his menacing attitude, compel the Americans to meet his force in the field. But on landing he was informed that Colonel McArthur had left the garrison two days before, and that his cavalry had been seen that morning three miles distant in the rear of the British. This decided Brock to make an immediate attack on the fort. The cause of McArthur's absence was the old trouble with regard to Brush who still halted at the river Raisin. On the evening of the fourteenth Colonels McArthur and Cass had set out with three hundred and fifty men for the Raisin, taking a circuitous route towards the head-waters of the Huron in order to avoid the Indians. The next afternoon, while entangled in a swamp and unable to proceed farther, they were summoned back to Detroit by a courier from General Hull, and were wearily making their way through the woods when seen by Brock's scouts.

Brock now advanced with his gallant little army towards

the fort, his left flank being guarded by the Indians, and his right resting on the river which was commanded by the guns of the *Queen Charlotte*. The cannon on the British batteries at Sandwich now began firing vigorously, and with fatal results to the American garrison. One shot which fell amongst a group standing at the door of one of the officers' quarters, killed three officers, one of them Lieutenant Hanks the late commandant at Mackinac, and wounded others. Two or three succeeding shots proved almost equally destructive and it was evident that the Sandwich batteries had got the range only too well. An extreme state of demoralization prevailed within the fort in which there were many women and other non-combatants in a terrified condition. The place was crowded with troops, and yet they were utterly helpless against the cannon balls which were dealing death and destruction around them.

At this time when General Brock, now within a few hundred yards of the fort, was preparing to deliver an assault, a white flag was displayed from the walls and General Hull's aide-de-camp was seen emerging from the American stronghold with a flag of truce. He bore proposals for a cessation of hostilities with a view to an immediate capitulation, and General Brock sent Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell and Captain Glegg to the American general to arrange the terms which were speedily agreed upon and signed. At noon the same day, a beautiful Sabbath morning, while the people of the United States were praying in their churches for the success of their unholy invasion of Canada, the American standard was lowered and the British flag raised over Fort Detroit. All the troops under the command of General Hull, numbering two thousand five hundred men, became prisoners of war, and all the armament and stores of the army passed into the hands of the British. The troops surrendered comprised the 4th U. S. Regiment of infantry and detachments of the 1st and 3rd Regiments, two troops of cavalry, one company of artillery engineers, three regiments of Ohio militia volunteers, and one regiment of Michigan militia. All the detached forces, including those

of McArthur and Brush, were embraced in the capitulation. The militia were permitted to return to their homes on condition that they did not serve again during the war, unless exchanged. Thirty-three pieces of cannon were surrendered, eight of which were of brass, two thousand five hundred stand of arms, forty barrels of gunpowder, four hundred rounds of 24-pound shot, one thousand cartridges and a vast quantity and variety of military stores. The armed brig *Adams* also became a prize; she was re-named the *Detroit*.

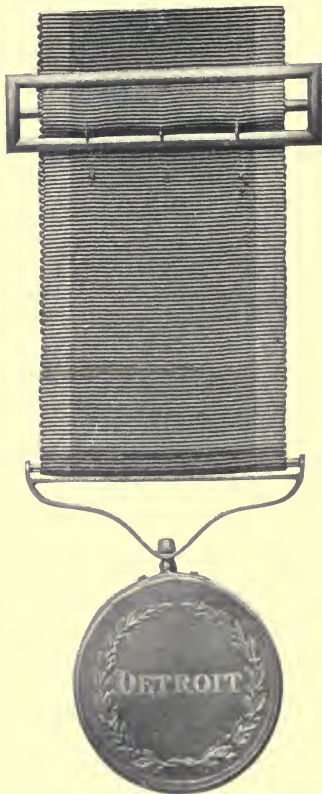
Thus ended in disaster and disgrace the first attempt to invade Canada. Undertaken in the wantonness of imagined power, for the subjection of a friendly people and the destruction of institutions which they cherished, it was doomed to failure from the outset, because it was entered upon without knowledge, discipline or skill, or even that ordinary courage which every soldier is supposed to possess.

The detachment of Brush with its convoy of cattle and provisions for the army had been included in the capitulation at the express request of Hull, as otherwise it would have been liable to be cut off and destroyed by the Indians, now relieved of any apprehensions in regard to Detroit. Captain Elliott and two companions were sent, on the day after the surrender, to the river Raisin with a flag of truce and a copy of the articles of capitulation to receive the surrender of Brush and his command. Brush had already received a note from McArthur enclosing a letter from Hull notifying him of the capitulation, yet he pretended to doubt the genuineness of Elliott's communication and put him in confinement. Then, hastily packing up the public property at the Raisin and driving the cattle before him, he started with his whole command for Ohio, leaving orders for Elliott to be released next day. This sample of Yankee "smartness" showed that the instincts of this Ohio officer, instead of being such as one would expect to find in the breast of an officer and a gentleman, were those of a thief, for the public property and arms thus carried off had been surrendered and belonged to the British government. In view of this piece of Ohio trickery

it would have been quite proper for General Brock to have refused to permit the Ohio volunteers, who had become prisoners of war, to return home on parole, as was provided in the capitulation; but he took no such step in reprisal. No doubt he thought it well to leave a monopoly of convention-breaking to the people whose Congress broke the convention of Saratoga in 1777, and who, instead of sending Burgoyne's army home to England, as had been solemnly promised, kept them prisoners for several years at Charlottesville, Virginia. The militia and volunteers were, therefore, permitted to return home, as had been stipulated, but the regulars were sent to Montreal and afterwards to Quebec.

The entrance of General Hull and his command into Quebec was made the occasion of a notable demonstration, every one being anxious to see this ruthless relic of the Revolution who had so suddenly descended from the position of an exterminating invader to that of a humble captive. It was remarked at the time, and should be remembered now, that the Indians, whom Hull had execrated, had been more merciful to his men than he would have been to the peaceful people of Canada; for, in the procession of prisoners, there were captives who had been taken by the Indians and treated well, and there were wounded men at Detroit to whom the Indians had given quarter at Brownstown. The most diligent American historian has failed to unearth a single case of "Indian atrocity" connected with Brock's campaign and the surrender of Hull in the North-West.

The surrender of Hull was a dreadful blow to the pride of the American people, and most damaging to the prestige of their government. It became necessary for them to find a victim to appease the popular wrath, and a convenient one was found in the general himself, who assumed all the responsibility of the affair. Lewis Cass prepared the public mind to look calmly on while Hull was being sacrificed by publishing a communication addressed to the government in which the patriotism and bravery of the army and the incompetency of the general were drawn with a strong hand. Hull was



GOLD MEDAL AWARDED TO LIEUT.-COLONEL
JOHN MACDONELL TO COMMEMORATE THE
CAPTURE OF DETROIT

Now in possession of J. A. Macdonell, K.C.,
Alexandria.—From "Richardson's War of
1812." By permission of the publishers.

afterwards tried by a court-martial, presided over by General Dearborn, his enemy, found guilty of cowardice and unofficerlike conduct and sentenced to be shot. President Madison approved the sentence but remitted the punishment. This was in April, 1814, and four months later President Madison was showing the whole world the quality of his own mettle by running away from Bladensburg, almost before a shot had been fired on that memorable field. Hull was no doubt a weak and incompetent man, but had he been otherwise he would have been out of harmony with the army he commanded, the volunteer portion of which was nothing but a mutinous mob without discipline or regard for their leaders, as their conduct showed. It did not lie in the power of generalship to make these men fit to encounter the disciplined British or the patriotic Canadians in the field,

and, therefore, Hull was unjustly condemned. The persons on whom the vengeance of the American people should have fallen were Mr. Madison and the members of his Cabinet who ordered the invasion of Canada by such a force.

CHAPTER V

BATTLE OF QUEENSTON HEIGHTS

It was a fortunate thing for the people of Canada that Secretary Eustis was so much enamoured of his own special enterprise against the Detroit frontier that he bestowed a smaller share of his attention on the other armies embraced in the contemplated plan of invasion, than the exigencies of the case seemed to demand. General Dearborn had been appointed first major-general or acting commander-in-chief in February, and the call for one hundred thousand militia had been issued in April, but there was no army ready to take the field when war was declared. Soon after the commencement of hostilities he fixed his headquarters at Greenbush, opposite Albany, and established there a military dépôt. His orders from the war department were to prepare for a movement in the direction of Niagara, Kingston, and Montreal, to take charge of the militia which Governor Tompkins had called out, and to make demonstrations against the Canadian frontier so as to prevent reinforcements being sent to Malden by the British. The militia of New York state, which was being collected under his banner, was formidable in point of numbers; the quota being twelve thousand men, divided into two divisions and eight brigades, comprising twenty regiments. Stephen Van Rensselaer of Albany was appointed to the command of this force, and was charged with the duty not only of defending the frontier of the state from St. Regis to Pennsylvania but also of invading Canada itself. This gentleman was not a military man, but a politician who had been opposed to the war, and whom it was thought proper to conciliate by this appointment. It, therefore, became necessary for

him to take, as his aide and military adviser, his cousin Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer, who had served in the regular army. Thus, by this unique arrangement, the singular spectacle was presented of a commander-in-chief going to school, as it were, to learn the art of war.

The British government, as has been seen, on the twenty-third of June,—four days after war had been declared but



GENERAL DEARBORN

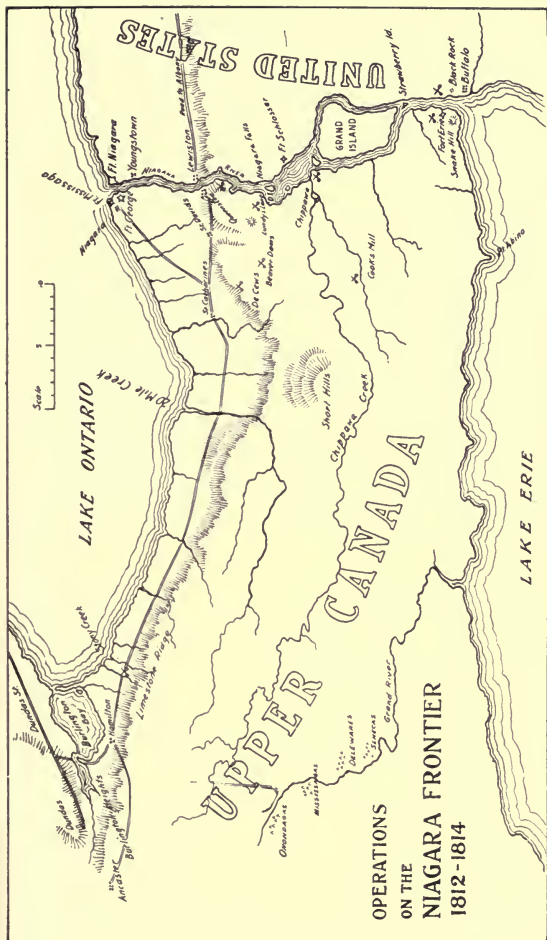
Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armies in 1812.

long before any news of it reached England—revoked its orders-in-council so far as they affected the United States. So certain were the British authorities that this would satisfy the Americans, that they instructed the admiral on the North American station to suspend proceedings against captured vessels, and Sir George Prevost was advised to propose an armistice and a suspension of operations on land pending a

communication with the United States government. The governor-general accordingly sent Adjutant-General Baynes to Greenbush, where, on the sixth of August, he concluded an armistice with General Dearborn. Sir George Prevost had desired that it should be made to apply to the operations on the Detroit frontier as well as to those to the eastward, but, as the former were not under General Dearborn's control, this could not be done. Thus it happened that the very steps taken by Secretary Eustis to win glory for himself led to the surrender of the army he controlled; for, if the armistice had applied to the Detroit frontier, Hull would have been saved. The American government refused to ratify the armistice, putting forth by way of justification several pretexts, such as,—that the president doubted the authority to suspend the proceedings of prize courts; that he saw no security against the Indians; and that the arrangement was unequal as it would afford an opportunity to reinforce Canada. Dearborn was peremptorily ordered to bring the armistice to a close, and it terminated on the twenty-ninth of August. Mr. Madison and his advisers believed that all Canada must speedily become their prize, and so, regardless of all else but the easy triumph which they anticipated, they resolved to go on with the war.

The armistice, while it lasted, was very detrimental to British interests, for it enabled the Americans to convey supplies and munitions of war for their army from Oswego to Niagara by water, and it released a number of commercial vessels blockaded at Ogdensburg, which were afterwards converted into war ships by which the command of Lake Ontario was, for a time, wrested from the British.

The Niagara frontier, which on the Canadian side is some thirty miles in length, is naturally weak and liable to attack from the other shore at many points. It was impossible for General Brock with the small force at his command, which did not exceed twelve hundred regulars and militia, to guard it strongly, as an overwhelming force was liable to be landed either at Fort Erie, Queenston or Fort George, and one of



OPERATIONS ON THE NIAGARA FRONTIER

these places occupied before assistance could reach it. He, however, disposed his troops to the best advantage the circumstances would admit of, and trusted to vigilance and activity to supply the place of numbers. Fort George, which was about a mile from Newark, as Niagara was then named, was the headquarters of the general and was garrisoned by part of the 41st Regiment and about three hundred militia. Guns were mounted between Fort George and Queenston, the principal battery being on Vrooman's Point a mile below that place. Here was placed a 24-pounder carronade which commanded both Lewiston on the American side of the river, and the Queenston landing. Queenston was occupied by the flank companies of the 49th Regiment under Captains Dennis and Williams and a body of militia, the whole numbering about three hundred rank and file. On Queenston Heights was a battery mounting an 18-pounder which commanded the river. At Chippawa were a small detachment of the 41st Regiment under Captain Bullock and the flank companies of the 2nd Lincoln militia under Captains Hamilton and Rowe. At Fort Erie, which was in an unfinished condition, was a small garrison consisting of a detachment of the 49th Regiment and some militia. Guns were mounted a short distance below Fort Erie, which commanded Black Rock on the American side of the river. The forces named formed a very inadequate provision for the defence of so extensive a line of frontier, but they were all that were available.

General Van Ransselaer arrived at Fort Niagara on the thirteenth of August, at which time the armistice was in force. It was terminated, as already stated, on the twenty-ninth, but General Dearborn was so leisurely in his movements that Van Rensselaer was not informed of the fact until the twelfth of September. The delay, however, made no difference for he was in no condition to begin active operations. The militia gathered slowly, and it was not until the first week in October that he felt himself strong enough to invade Canada. Van Rensselaer's plan of invasion, as disclosed to his subordinates,

Major-General Hull of the militia of western New York, and Brigadier Smyth, of the regular army, can best be stated in his own words: "I propose," said he, "that we immediately concentrate the regular force in the neighbourhood of Niagara and the militia at Lewiston, make the best possible dispositions, and at the same time the regulars will pass Four Mile Creek to a point in the rear of the works of Fort George and take it



FORT NIAGARA (U.S.)

At the mouth of the Niagara River, as it was in 1812. From an old print.

by storm; I will pass the river here (Lewiston) and carry the heights of Queenston. Should we succeed we shall effect a great discomfiture of the enemy by breaking their line of communication, driving their shipping from the mouth of the river, leaving them no rallying point in this part of the country, appalling the minds of the Canadians, and opening a wide and safe communication for our supplies. We shall save our land, wipe away part of the score of our past disgrace, get excellent barracks and winter quarters, and at least be prepared for an early campaign another year." The letter in which this comprehensive plan of invasion was thus detailed, contained an invitation to the officers named to meet him in council; but the council was not held, owing to the failure of General

Smyth to attend. The American commanding general was, therefore, left to his own plans as to the best way to drive the British from the Niagara frontier.

While General Van Rensselaer was thus engaged in the agreeable duty of taking Canada, on paper, the press and people of the United States were manifesting an extreme impatience at the slowness of his movements. They could not understand why he did not instantly take possession of the Upper Province. Here was a territory inhabited by less than one hundred thousand souls and guarded by a few militia and regulars. Was it to be supposed that they could defend themselves against the great state of New York with its one million of people, aided by the whole power of the United States? In this case there was no danger of communications being cut, as was the case with Hull, for the whole route through the state of New York to the frontier was well settled, and no interference with the passage of troops or supplies was possible. Thus the impatient public argued, and there seemed to be a good deal of reason in what they said. General Dearborn himself appears to have held similar views, for on the twenty-sixth of September he wrote to Van Rensselaer: "At all events we must calculate on possessing Canada before the winter sets in."

The militia of the state were also anxious to begin active operations. They desired to wipe away the disgrace of Hull's surrender, and their clamour to be led against the enemy became so loud that Van Rensselaer feared his army would break up in confusion unless he made an immediate advance. The martial zeal of the militia was further inflamed by the success of an enterprise which was undertaken by Lieutenant Elliott of the United States navy, who had been sent to superintend the construction of a fleet on Lake Erie. Two small vessels, the *Detroit* of two hundred tons, which had been captured at Detroit, and the *Caledonia* of ninety tons, were lying off Fort Erie on the eighth of October. The *Detroit* mounted six 6-pounders, was manned by a crew of fifty-six men, and had on board thirty American prisoners. The *Caledonia* had two

4-pounders, a crew of twelve men, and ten American prisoners. That night Elliott, in two large boats manned by one hundred and twenty-four soldiers and sailors, succeeded in boarding and capturing both vessels, no very difficult achievement when it is considered that the prisoners they had on board were almost as numerous as their crews, and that the attack was a complete surprise. The *Caledonia* was carried under the guns of the American battery at Black Rock; but the *Detroit* was driven on Squaw Island and destroyed, neither the Americans nor the British being strong enough to retain possession of her.

After this achievement any postponement of the invasion of Canada would have been regarded as unpatriotic. General Van Rensselaer was well aware of the weakness of the British force and he considered his own army quite strong enough for the work. He had six thousand three hundred men, of which three thousand six hundred and fifty were regulars and two thousand six hundred and fifty militia. At Lewiston, which was the headquarters of the American general, were two thousand two hundred and seventy militia and nine hundred regulars. At Fort Niagara there was a garrison of eleven hundred regulars, nearly as many as the entire force which Brock had at his disposal to guard the thirty miles of frontier. On the tenth of October a spy, whom General Van Rensselaer had sent across the river to the British camp, returned with the false report that General Brock with all his disposable force had moved off in the direction of Detroit. This news at once brought the scheme of invasion to a head. The general resolved to make the crossing early on the morning of the eleventh at Lewiston, where the river is not more than an eighth of a mile in width but flows with a very swift current. Accordingly, thirteen large boats capable of carrying three hundred and fifty men were prepared, experienced boatmen were secured, and the command of the flotilla given to Lieutenant Sims, who was considered to be the ablest officer for the service. At the appointed hour the troops were ready, Colonel Van Rensselaer, who was to lead them, at their head.

Lieutenant Sims entered the foremost boat and started, and as soon as he got away from the shore it was discovered that he had taken most of the oars with him. In vain the others waited for his return. Sims crossed over with his boat, and as soon as he had landed on Canadian soil took to his heels and was no more seen by his too confiding countrymen. The rest of the intended invaders waited on the American shore in the midst of a furious rain-storm until daylight, and then marched back to their camps drenched to the skin, but more determined than ever to capture Canada.



LOOKING DOWN THE NIAGARA RIVER FROM QUEENSTON HEIGHTS TOWARDS
LAKE ONTARIO

The village of Queenston is just below the Heights. Lewiston, on the United States side, is just across the river.

On the following night a more successful attempt was made. It was arranged that Colonel Van Rensselaer should first cross with three hundred regulars and the same number of militia, to be followed by more regulars and militia. Three o'clock on the morning of the thirteenth was the appointed hour for the start, and it proved intensely dark, and, therefore, favourable for the enterprise. The boats, thirteen in number, were conducted by a citizen of Lewiston who was familiar with the river; and the place of landing on the Canadian shore was to

be at a point just beneath the site where afterwards stood the Lewiston suspension bridge. The regulars reached the boats first and crossed over, taking with them about sixty of the militia. Three of the boats, in one of which was Lieutenant-Colonel Chrystie, lost their way and put back, but the other ten with two hundred and twenty-five regulars reached the landing-place in safety, landed the men and put back for reinforcements. Before this the alarm had been given and the 24-pounder on Vrooman's Point, and the 18-pounder on Queenston Heights began firing on the American boats, and this seems to have been the cause of Chrystie's retirement. His boatmen had become demoralized and had sought the American side of the river. One of the two boats which accompanied him, however, crossed over by his orders to the Queenston side, while the other made a bad landing on the Canadian shore and was captured. The American batteries at Lewiston replied vigorously to the British guns and sought to cover the landing of the troops which were now hurried across as rapidly as possible.

Queenston, as already stated, was at this time held by the flank companies of the 49th Regiment under Captains Dennis and Williams and a body of York militia, the whole numbering three hundred rank and file. As soon as the landing of the Americans became known Captain Dennis with sixty men, made up of parts of the grenadier company of the 49th and Captain Hatt's company of the Lincoln militia, and a 3-pounder, advanced against Colonel Van Rensselaer's force which was now awaiting the return of the boats with the militia. The British made their presence known by pouring a deadly volley into the American ranks, and a brisk skirmish followed. The guns of the Lewiston batteries were turned on the little British detachment, and the Americans were reinforced from the other side of the river. They had suffered severely, Colonel Van Rensselaer and several other American officers being among the wounded. Captain Dennis was now joined by the remaining subdivisions of the grenadiers and of Hatt's company of militia, while the light

infantry of the 49th under Captain Williams, and Captain Chisholm's company of York militia opened a severe fire on the Americans from the brow of the heights. The invaders, who had been able to advance to the plateau, were now compelled to fall back on the beach below the hill and take shelter from the fire of the British. There they were further reinforced by the arrival of more regulars from Lewiston.

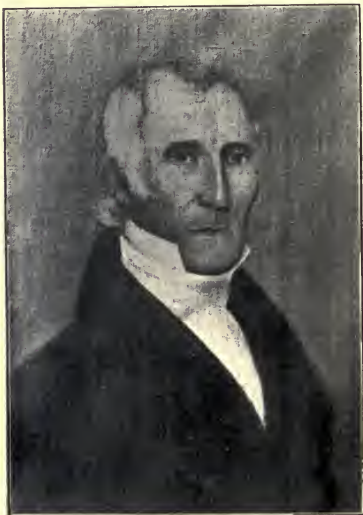
General Brock, who was at Fort George when the attack was made, was aroused at the first alarm, and, accompanied by his aides Macdonell and Glegg, at once galloped to the scene of action. He arrived at the battery on the heights about break of day, and, observing that the Americans were being strongly reinforced, ordered Captain Williams with his regulars and militia to descend the hill and support Captain Dennis. The only force then left on the heights was the twelve men in charge of the 18-pounder. Seeing the heights thus denuded of troops, Colonel Van Rensselaer conceived the idea of capturing them by surprise. There were among his officers two lieutenants who knew the ground well and who undertook to guide a force by a concealed path to a point behind the battery. Captain Wool was ordered to this duty, and taking a strong detachment with him he proceeded to carry out his instructions. As some of the men had been seen to falter in the previous skirmish, Colonel Van Rensselaer ordered his aide-de-camp, Judge-Advocate Lush, to follow the column and shoot every soldier who evinced any disposition to retire. The path which Wool took had been observed by General Brock, but he was assured by those whose local knowledge should have been superior to his, that it was inaccessible, and so it was left unguarded. The result of this incorrect information was the loss of his own valuable life.

The first intimation that Brock had of the presence of the Americans on the heights was the sight of them issuing from the woods a few yards to the rear of the battery. As they were in force this necessitated a speedy retreat from the hill, and the general, his two aides and the twelve gunners, accordingly retired, leaving the Americans in possession of the 18-

pounder. Despatching a courier to Fort George for reinforcements, General Brock took command of Captain Williams's little force of regulars and militia which numbered about one hundred men, and led them up against the three or four hundred American regulars and militia who now occupied the battery. As he was gallantly showing them the path to victory and cheering them on, this brave soldier was struck in the breast by a bullet, and almost immediately expired. His aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, now arrived with the two flank companies of the York militia and led them and Williams's detachment, the whole numbering about two hundred men, up the heights against the enemy. Wool and his men were driven from the battery and forced to spike the 18-pounder, but at that moment both Macdonell and Williams were wounded, the former mortally, and being without a leader the British and Canadians were forced to fall back. As, from the great number of the enemy now on the heights, it was evident they could not be dislodged until reinforcements arrived, Captain Dennis, who now took the command, led his little force to a position in front of the battery on Vrooman's Point. The Americans proceeded to establish themselves on the heights by despatching flanking parties, gathering up their wounded and drilling out the 18-pounder, which Wool says in his report they desired to bring to bear on the village. Just then the chief, Norton, made his appearance on the field followed by about fifty Indians. They drove in the enemy's flanking parties and terrified some of the militia, but, after a sharp skirmish, fell back before his overwhelming force.

The invaders, however, were not to be long permitted to rest undisturbed. Major-General Sheaffe was advancing rapidly from Fort George with reinforcements consisting of three hundred and eighty rank and file of the 41st Regiment and three hundred militia. These were the flank companies of the 1st Regiment of Lincoln militia under Captains J. Crooks and McEwen; the flank companies of the 4th Regiment of Lincoln militia, under Captains Nelles and W. Crooks; three companies of the 5th Regiment of Lincoln militia under Cap-

tains Hall, Durand and Applegarth; Major Merritt's Niagara dragoons and a body of militia artillery under Captains Powell and Cameron. General Sheaffe marched down the St. Davids road to a path through the fields which was pointed out as a



MAJOR THOMAS MERRITT, U.E.L.

Commanding Officer of Mounted Corps of Niagara district, 1812-14. Previously Cornet in Queen's Rangers in the Revolutionary War. After the battle of Queenston he was deputed by General Sheaffe to receive the swords of the enemy. He was one of the pall-bearers to General Brock. He was afterwards sheriff of the Niagara district, and died at the age of eighty-three.

favourable track for ascending the heights, and formed his men in a field near the Chippawa road. Here he was joined by sixty grenadiers of the 41st Regiment, under Captain Bullock, the flank companies of the 2nd Lincoln Regiment, under Captains Hamilton and Rowe, and a few of the volunteer sedentary militia. The whole force under General Sheaffe's command and available for an attack on the enemy, including

the troops engaged in the morning, numbered about five hundred and forty regulars, four hundred and fifty militia and a few Indians.

General Van Rensselaer, from the heights whither he had followed his army, had seen the approach of General Sheaffe's force, and also observed that the troops at Lewiston were embarking very slowly. He passed over at once to accelerate their movements, but, to use his own language, to his utter astonishment he found that "the ardour of the unengaged troops had entirely subsided." He says, "I rode in all direc-



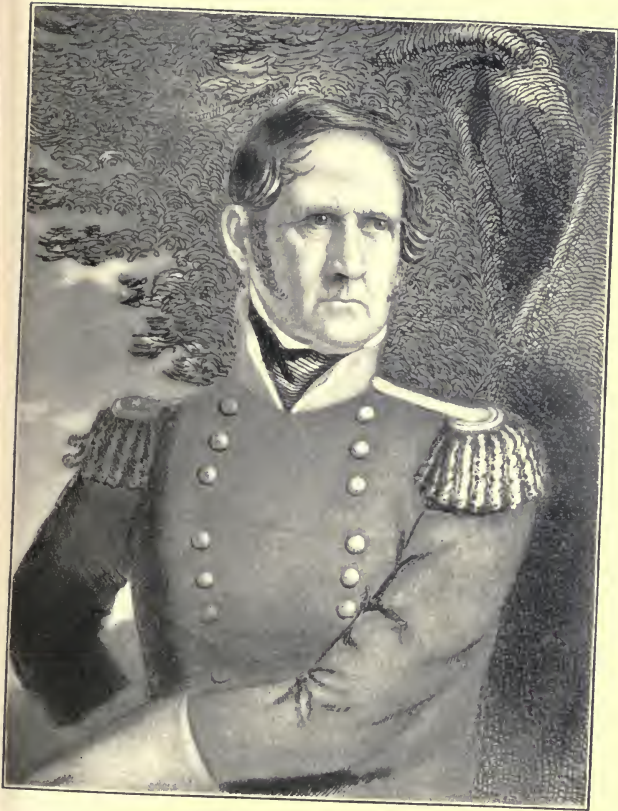
CAPTAIN WILLIAM HAMILTON MERRITT

Son of Major Thomas Merritt, served with his father during the war. Afterwards took a prominent part in Upper Canada politics.

tions, urged the men by every consideration to pass over, but all in vain. Lieutenant-Colonel Bloom, who had been wounded in action, returned, mounted his horse, and rode through the camp, as did also Judge Peck who happened to be here,

exhorting the companies to proceed—but all in vain.” The militia of New York had suddenly abdicated their functions as soldiers and had become expounders of the law. A week before they had been clamouring to be led into Canada, now they set up the plea that as militia they were not liable to serve out of their own state. They had seen the wounded come over from Queenston and it was not a pleasant sight. They had been told by their companions of the terrible powers of the “green tigers,” as they called the men of the 49th Regiment, and they did not desire to meet them on the field. Those excellent sticklers for the constitution have been somewhat severely dealt with by their own countrymen, so that it is unnecessary for a Canadian writer to reopen the wound. They have been denounced as “cowards” and “poltroons;” their correct constitutional views have been held up to public scorn as “a miserable subterfuge,” and they have been designated as proper objects for “a storm of indignation.”

As the Americans on Queenston Heights could not be reinforced, General Sheaffe made very short work of them. He had placed two pieces of field artillery with thirty men under Lieutenant Holcroft in front of Queenston to prevent the enemy from entering the village, and he now advanced upon the Americans with two 3-pounders. The light company of the 41st Regiment under Lieutenant McIntyre, with about fifty militia and thirty or forty Indians fell upon the American right. A single volley was followed by a bayonet charge which drove the invaders back in confusion. Then Sheaffe ordered the whole line to charge, and the Americans broke instantly and fled, a terrified and demoralized mob. Some threw themselves over the precipices, some escaped down the pathway; there was no thought among any of them but to get in safety to the American side of the river. Many leaped into the swift current and swam across; many were drowned in attempting to do this, and others seized such boats as were on the Queenston side and rowed across. To the majority, however, such means of escape were not available, and the American general, Brigadier Wadsworth, sent in a flag of truce



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WINFIELD SCOTT

Who carried in the flag of truce when nine hundred and thirty-one United States troops surrendered on Queenston Heights.—From Peterson's "Military Heroes."

by Lieutenant-Colonel Winfield Scott offering to surrender the whole force, which was immediately done. The Americans who thus laid down their arms, numbered nine hundred and thirty-one, including seventy-three officers. This number included two boat-loads captured in the morning. They acknowledged a loss of ninety killed and one hundred wounded, but these round numbers are probably under the mark. The best estimates place the number of Americans who crossed over to Canada at one thousand five hundred, and it is impossible there could have been fewer, unless some of the regulars, as well as the militia, disobeyed orders and stood upon the constitution, for there were, including Lieutenant-



After the battle of Queenston Heights, seventy-three United States officers surrendered their swords. This is one of those surrendered on that occasion, and is now in possession of the Merritt family, St. Catharines.

Colonel Scott's regiment, one thousand three hundred regulars in Lewiston on the morning of the invasion, and three hundred militia were taken on Queenston Heights with arms in their hands. The British loss amounted to eleven killed and sixty wounded. This includes the loss suffered by the militia who covered themselves with glory on that day. The Indians lost five killed and nine wounded. The only officers killed in the battle were General Brock and his aide, Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, "whose gallantry and merit," to quote General Sheaffe's words, "render him worthy of his chief."



BROCK'S MONUMENT ON QUEENSTON HEIGHTS

It is hardly possible to exaggerate the extent of the loss which Canada suffered in the death of Sir Isaac Brock. At the time it was justly regarded as an offset to the victory, and the lapse of years has strengthened that impression. He was a man of such energy and skill that, had he lived, the subsequent campaigns would have assumed a very different complexion. He was the only officer in Canada of sufficient rank and authority to be able to counteract the malign influence of Sir George Prevost, whose conduct throughout the war was such as to leave students of history in doubt even as to his loyalty. Yet there were compensations for Brock's death in the example which he left behind him of chivalrous daring and unswerving devotion to duty. His name sounds to-day in Canada as the watchword of the patriot, and no bugle blast could call the loyal to arms more quickly than a demand that they should emulate the heroic Brock. The traveller who approaches Queenston Heights, from whatever quarter, can see the lofty column which the people of this land have erected to his memory standing boldly out against the skyline to inform the whole world that patriotism still lives in Canada. If ever the men of Ontario need a rallying-ground against any future invader they will find one on Queenston Heights beneath the shadow of the monument they have reared to General Brock.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE NIAGARA FRONTIER

WHILE the battle was going on at Queenston, the batteries of the American fort Niagara and of Fort George commenced a vigorous cannonade which continued for several hours, or until the American garrison under Captain Leonard was compelled to evacuate its fort and retire out of gun shot. The enemy fired red hot shot, and, with an utter disregard of the courtesies of civilized warfare, turned their guns on the village of Newark and set several houses on fire. The guns on the British batteries near Fort Erie also opened on the American barracks at Black Rock, and there was a brisk interchange of shots which continued until a ball from a heavy gun, aimed by Bombardier Walker of the Royal Artillery, penetrated a magazine in the east barracks at Black Rock from which powder was being removed and blew it up, causing a great destruction of life and property. At the request of General Van Rensselaër, Major-General Sheaffe, who was now in command of the Niagara frontier, agreed upon an armistice on the morning after the battle of Queenston. It was confined to the frontier between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario and was to be terminated on thirty hours' notice. This arrangement was viewed with great disfavour in Canada, because it was justly thought that the motive of the American general in asking for a cessation of hostilities was to enable him, without disturbance, to gather his forces to a head for another attack on the frontier. As in the demoralized condition to which the American army had been reduced the capture and destruction of Fort Niagara was a feasible operation, there seemed to be no reason why the opportunity to take this fortress

should be thrown away. Had this been done, and the position held, any further invasion of Canada from that direction would have been impossible, and the destruction which fell on Newark and the Niagara frontier generally, at a later period, would have been averted.

The American regulars captured at Queenston were sent to Quebec as prisoners of war for exchange, but the militia were paroled and allowed to go home. The whole affair was a deplorable humiliation to the American people, who had expected nothing less than that their Niagara army would winter in Upper Canada. In the Detroit surrender there was some slight solace for their pride in the fact that they could lay the blame upon General Hull, and, while representing him as weak and cowardly, exalt his army as a band of heroes who had been balked of their conquest; but the Queenston disgrace was a dark cloud that had no silver lining. It was not the general who was at fault but the men, and the shame was not that of an individual, but of a nation. Here was a militia army of invasion that would not invade, and a band of heroes that dreaded the smell of gunpowder. It may be of interest to note the fact that the militia which thus stood upon its constitutional rights belonged to the brigades of Generals Wadsworth and Miller, and comprised the regiments from Seneca, Geneva, Ontario, Oneida and St. Lawrence counties.

General Van Rensselaer, having arrived at the conclusion that he could be more useful to his country elsewhere than at the head of the army, on the twenty-fourth of October resigned the command of the troops on the Niagara frontier to General Smyth of the regular service. This officer at once began making preparations for a third invasion of Canada, and as a preliminary measure, issued, on the tenth of November, a proclamation to the "men of New York," inviting them to flock to his standard. In this remarkable document he took occasion to censure both Hull and Van Rensselaer by saying: "One army has been disgracefully surrendered and lost. Another has been sacrificed by a

precipitate attempt to pass over at the strongest point of the enemy's lines with most incompetent means. The cause of these miscarriages is apparent. The commanders were popular men destitute alike of theory and experience in the art of war." "In a few days," he continued, "the troops under my command will plant the American standard in Canada. They are men accustomed to obedience, silence and steadiness, they will conquer or they will die. Will you stand with your arms folded and look on this interesting struggle? The present is the hour of renown. Have you not a wish for fame? Would you not choose in future times to be named as one of those, who, imitating the heroes whom Montgomery led, has, in spite of the seasons, visited the tomb of the chief and conquered the country where he lies? Yes, you desire your share of fame. Then seize the present moment; if you do not you will regret it and say:—'The valiant have bled in vain, the friends of my country fell—and I was not there.'"

Stimulated by these tremendous words the men of New York flocked to General Smyth's standard until he had more than four thousand five hundred troops in his camp at Black Rock, in addition to the large detachments at Fort Niagara and other parts of the frontier. On the seventeenth of November, the American general, thinking that the patriotism of his army needed some further stimulant, issued a second proclamation addressed to the soldiers of the "Army of the Centre." In this truly Napoleonic document General Smyth says: "Companions in Arms—The time is at hand when you will cross the stream at Niagara to conquer Canada, and to secure the peace of the American frontier. You will enter a country that is to be one of the United States. You will arrive among a people who are to become your fellow-citizens. Soldiers, you are amply provided for war. You are superior in numbers to the enemy. Your personal strength and activity are greater. Your weapons are longer. The regular soldiers of the enemy are generally old men whose best years have been spent in the sickly climate of the West Indies.

They will not be able to stand before you—you, who charge with the bayonet. You will shun the eternal infamy that awaits the man, who, having once come within sight of the enemy, basely shrinks in the moment of trial. Soldiers of every corps, it is in your power to retrieve the honour of your country and crown yourselves with glory, come on my heroes! And when you attack the enemy's batteries let your rallying word be, 'The cannon lost at Detroit or death!'"

General Smyth had always maintained that the Niagara River should be crossed at some point between Niagara and Chippawa, and he made active preparations for a movement in that quarter. On the nineteenth of November he gave notice that the armistice was to end, and on the twenty-first the American batteries at Black Rock, and those on the Canadian shore opposite, cannonaded each other as did Fort George and Fort Niagara at the other end of the line. These operations were not attended with much loss on either side, but several houses in Newark and the buildings in Fort Niagara were repeatedly set on fire. On the twenty-fifth General Smyth issued orders for "the whole army" to be ready to march at a moment's warning. The period for the third invasion of Canada had arrived. On the twenty-seventh a general muster of the troops at Black Rock showed that he had four thousand five hundred men in line. They consisted of his own regulars, the Baltimore volunteers under Colonel Winder, the Pennsylvania volunteers under General Tannehill, and the New York volunteers under General Peter B. Porter. The regulars of this army numbered upwards of one thousand five hundred. Nor was there any lack of facilities for crossing the river. Seventy boats, each capable of carrying forty men, were provided in addition to five large boats, each capable of holding one hundred men, besides ten scows for artillery and a number of small private boats, so that three thousand five hundred men could cross at once, a force so overwhelming that had they been landed on the Canadian shore successful resistance would have been impossible.

The force on the Canadian side of the river above Chippawa



A SERGEANT OF THE GRENADEIER COMPANY OF THE 49TH REGIMENT
Present at Queenston—Brock's and Fitz Gibbon's Regiment.

was in almost ludicrous contrast to this formidable array which General Smyth commanded. At Fort Erie, which formed the extreme right of the British position, Major Ormsby of the 49th Regiment was in command with eighty men of that regiment and fifty of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment under Captain Whelan. Two companies of Norfolk militia under Captain Bostwick occupied the ferry opposite Black Rock and distant about a mile from Fort Erie. At the Red House, a building used as a barracks on the Chippawa road three miles from Fort Erie, were stationed Lieutenant Lamont with thirty-seven men of the 49th, and Lieutenant King of the Royal Artillery with two light field-guns, a 3 and a 6-pounder, worked by a few militia artillerymen. Near the Red House were two batteries, one mounting an 18 and the other a 24-pounder, in charge of Lieutenant Bryson of the militia artillery, and under the general direction of Lamont. About a mile farther down the Chippawa road was another small detachment of the 49th numbering thirty-seven men, under the command of Lieutenant Bartley. Near Frenchman's Creek, five miles from Fort Erie, Lieutenant McIntyre was stationed with the light company of the 41st Regiment numbering seventy rank and file. Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp, who commanded all the troops from Fort Erie to Chippawa, was at the latter place with a detachment of the 41st Regiment under Captain Saunders, a company of the 2nd Lincoln militia under Captain Hamilton, and a light 6-pounder in charge of Captain Kirby of the militia artillery. A short distance from Chippawa towards Fort Erie was a detachment of the 5th Lincoln militia under Major Hatt. The total number of troops available to defend the sixteen miles between Fort Erie and Chippawa did not exceed one thousand, of which four hundred occupied the five miles from Frenchman's Creek to Fort Erie. This last fact suggested to General Smyth a plan by which the frontier could be carried. This was to effect a crossing with one detachment at the ferry where the Canadian militia were stationed, and, while the British were concentrating in that quarter, to

send another detachment to Frenchman's Creek, rout the troops stationed there, and hold the line of the creek so that Major Ormsby could not be reinforced from Chippawa while the American army was crossing at Fort Erie. This was an excellent plan, and with a little more energy and coolness on the part of the Americans, and a little less vigilance on the Canadian side of the river, it might have succeeded.

Between two and three o'clock on the morning of the twenty-eighth of November, the third invasion of Canada commenced. The American armies had been assembled in the darkness and the detachments which were to clear the way for the crossing of the whole army, were embarked. The force intended for the assault on the militia and the capture of the British batteries opposite Black Rock was in ten boats, and consisted of three hundred and twenty regulars selected from four different regiments of United States infantry, and eighty sailors under Lieutenant Angus. The whole was under the command of Captain King of the 15th infantry. The detachment whose duty it was to destroy the bridge over Frenchman's Creek consisted of Colonel Winder's Baltimore volunteers, four hundred and forty strong, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Boerstler of the regular army. King's party, which got away first, was discovered by the Norfolk militia when about half way across the river, and, although the night was intensely dark, the loyal yeomanry gave them such a warm reception that they did not venture to land at the point intended, but dropped down with the current nearly opposite to the Red House. The fieldpieces there fired two or three rounds, although nothing could be seen, and this had the effect of arousing all the British posts as far as Chippawa, and of frightening back to the American shore six of their ten boats. King landed with the remainder of his force consisting of one hundred regulars and sixty sailors and attacked Colonel Lamont's detachment of thirty-seven men at the Red House. After a struggle which lasted some time the Americans were driven back to the shore with heavy loss, but, passing by a circuitous route

in the darkness, they came on the left of Lamont's position. That officer mistook them for a reinforcement which was expected, but was rudely undeceived when a volley killed or wounded fifteen of his little party. Lamont himself and Lieutenant King of the artillery were severely wounded, the latter, as it turned out, mortally. The survivors of Lamont's half company were forced to retire leaving three unwounded prisoners in the hands of the enemy. The Americans now spiked the two fieldpieces and set fire to the Red House. As there was no adequate force to defend the batteries they had no difficulty in taking them, but Lieutenant Bryson before he retired spiked the 18-pounder. The Americans spiked the other gun and dismounted both.

Major Ormsby, as soon as he heard the firing at the Red House, leaving Captain Whelan's detachment of the Newfoundland Regiment to guard Fort Erie, advanced with his eighty men of the 49th towards the batteries by the back road to support Lieutenant Lamont; but having met Lieutenant Bryson, who informed him that the enemy were already in possession of the batteries, he changed his direction and moved to the right along the front road which passed below the batteries. This was done with a view to falling in with some part of Lamont's detachment, and also that of Lieutenant Bartley, a mile below the Red House. The advance of Major Ormsby led to a curious result. Captain King's regulars had become separated from the seamen under Lieutenant Angus who were gathered near the beach. The latter had suffered very severely in the encounter with Lamont's men, so as Ormsby approached Angus gathered his detachment into the boats with his wounded and some of the British prisoners, and rowed back to the American shore, leaving Captain King and his party without any means of crossing. That officer fled along the shore towards Chippawa for a couple of miles, until he found two large boats in which he placed all his officers and most of his detachment, but there was not room for the whole of it, and with the thirty men that remained with him he was captured by the British soon after daylight.

Boerstler's eleven boats, in the meantime, had been crossing with a view to landing near the bridge over Frenchman's Creek, the destruction of which was the principal object of the expedition. The boats became separated in the darkness and four of them fell below the bridge, having been driven off by Lieutenant McIntyre with the light company of the 41st Regiment, and were out of the fight. The other seven boats with Boerstler himself landed above the bridge and were assailed by Lieutenant Bartley with his half company of the 49th, and for the moment checked, but thirty-seven men could not be expected to stand long against two hundred and eighty, so Bartley had to retire after losing all but seventeen of his men. Captain Bostwick now approached with his two companies of Norfolk militia, but after a short skirmish, finding the enemy greatly superior in numbers he retired with the loss of two killed, seventeen wounded and six taken prisoners. The difficulties of the situation for the British were enormously increased by the fact that it was pitch dark, and the strength of the enemy unknown. Most American writers attempt to make a great hero of Boerstler and describe how he "exerting a stentorian voice, roared in various directions, as though he commanded thousands, and created such a panic in the enemy that they fled before him wherever he moved." It will be seen in a subsequent chapter what a pitiful figure this loud-voiced American hero cut at Beaver Dam, a few months later.

As Lieutenant McIntyre's detachment was engaged in preventing the landing of the four boats that had fallen below the bridge, Boerstler reached that structure without further opposition, and attempted to destroy it. In this he failed, American writers say because the axes had been left in the boats, but in reality because of Major Ormsby's approach. A few shots were fired at his men by the Americans from a house above the bridge, but Ormsby pushed on and crossed it, yet, although he halted there for some time, he could neither see the enemy nor discover his movements. The fact was that Boerstler suddenly took himself

off about this time and sought safety on the American shore. Ormsby, after a long wait, advanced about a mile farther down the road where he was joined by Lieutenant McIntyre's company and halted his men until daylight. Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp arrived at this time from Chippawa with three hundred men of the 5th Lincoln militia under Major Hatt, whom he had overtaken on the road. He also brought with him from Chippawa a light 6-pounder under Captain Kirby. These with Captain Saunders' detachment of the 41st Regiment and Captain Hamilton's company of the 2nd Lincoln militia under Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, brought up his force to about six hundred men of which two hundred and fifty were regulars. Bisshopp now advanced and took Captain King and his thirty men prisoners. Colonel Winder with five boats containing two hundred and fifty men, at this time attempted to cross to reinforce King, but all but the one in which Winder was were driven back by the fire of the light 6-pounder. Winder himself had the temerity to land, but the loss of six killed and twenty-two wounded in less time than it takes to relate it, instantly convinced him of the necessity of a speedy retreat. Bisshopp took up a position in the rear of the batteries and awaited any further attack that the enemy might make, but none was made, although the American troops had been under arms since daylight and the work of embarking them had been going on all the morning. General Smyth about noon sent over a summons to Bisshopp proposing the surrender of Fort Erie, "to spare the effusion of blood," but this demand was declined. The order then came for the Americans to "disembark and dine," and this ended the active operations of the day.

The British loss in killed on this occasion was heavier than that in the battle of Queenston, although the whole force engaged did not much exceed three hundred men, and the severe fighting was confined to little more than half that number. The total was sixteen killed, thirty-seven wounded and thirty missing. Of this total of eighty-three the two companies of Norfolk militia lost twenty-six, including Cap-

tain Bostwick and Lieutenant Ryerson wounded, the latter severely. The American loss it is impossible now to ascertain for their historians maintain a profound silence on the point, but it must have been very large. The sailors returned a loss in killed and wounded at the Red House of thirty including nine of their twelve officers engaged. Winder, as has been seen, lost twenty-eight men of the fifty in his own boat; Captain King lost thirty men taken prisoners. These figures make up a total of eighty-eight. But to these must be added the loss in killed and wounded which Captain King's regulars suffered at the Red House; the losses of Boerstler's detachment in its conflict with Lieutenant Bartley's men and Captain Bostwick's militia; the killed and wounded in the four boats driven off by Lieutenant McIntyre; the losses in Winder's boats which did not land, and in others that were sunk in attempting to cross. Adding these items together it is impossible to believe that the losses of the enemy were less than two hundred and fifty, and possibly they were greater. Nothing saved the British that day from a disaster but the heroic courage of the British and Canadians engaged, the vigilance of Bostwick's Norfolk militia stationed at the ferry, the activity of Lieutenant-Colonel Clark and Major Hatt of the Lincoln militia in bringing up their reinforcements from Chippawa to Frenchman's Creek, a distance of ten miles, by daybreak, and, it may be added, the extreme caution, not to say timidity, which the Americans showed in crossing after Lieutenant Angus had got back to Black Rock with his bloody cargo of wounded from the Red House. No Briton or Canadian need be ashamed of the way in which his countrymen fought in repelling that formidable invasion. Bostwick's militia lost about one-fourth of their whole number, and Bartley's seventy-four men about two-thirds, for of the fifty-two men of the 49th who were killed, wounded, or missing, nearly all belonged to that little company.

Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp, having recovered his field-guns and remounted his heavy cannon, was in a good position

to resist any attack that the enemy might make. The American general had called a council of his officers, but they could not agree as to the propriety of another attempt on Canada. On the evening of the twenty-ninth, however, Smyth issued an order for his troops to be ready to embark on the following morning. He addressed his men in such stirring words as these: "The general will be on hand. Neither rain, snow nor frost will prevent the embarkation. The cavalry will scour the fields from Black Rock to the bridge and suffer no idle spectators. While embarking, the music will play martial airs. 'Yankee Doodle' will be the signal to get under way. The landing will be effected in spite of cannon. The whole army has seen that cannon are to be little dreaded. . . . Hearts of War! to-morrow will be memorable in the annals of the United States."

Smyth's officers objected to the time and manner of the proposed embarkation, and the general was induced to defer it until the following day, which was Tuesday, the first of December, and it was arranged that the American troops should land several miles below Black Rock and near the upper end of Grand Island. From that point they were to march directly upon Chippawa. Tuesday morning came but at the appointed hour only one thousand five hundred men were embarked, the Pennsylvania volunteers having raised the constitutional question that they were not compelled to fight out of their own country. Their example was imitated by others who held back from the boats and from the dangers which they had been eager to face a few days before. At this juncture Smyth hastily called a council of his regular officers and their decision was soon made known. The men on the boats were disembarked and informed that the invasion of Canada was abandoned for the present. The regulars were then ordered into winter quarters and the militia sent home. This ended the operations of the grand "Army of the Centre," and also the military career of General Smyth.



THE FIRST MONUMENT ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF GENERAL BROCK

This was blown up on April 17th, 1840, by Benjamin Lett, a renegade Canadian. This view is taken from the United States shore, with Queenston in the distance. From a contemporary sketch.

CHAPTER VII

FAILURE OF DEARBORN'S CAMPAIGN

FOR the purpose of completing the narrative of the events of the year 1812 it is now necessary to go back somewhat and relate the occurrences on Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence, and the frontier from St. Regis to the head of Lake Champlain. When the war broke out the British force on Lake Ontario was stronger than that of the Americans, and had Sir George Prevost been endowed with correct military instincts he would have seen to it that this state of affairs continued. But he apparently did not understand that the safety of Canada depended on the naval ascendancy of the British on Lake Ontario, so the Americans, by greater diligence at the beginning of the war, were able to dispute that ascendancy and occasionally wrest it from us, although, fortunately, not for long enough at any one time to produce a fatal result. In June, 1812, Commodore Earle, who commanded on the lake, had five small vessels in his squadron, the *Royal George*, *Prince Regent*, *Earl of Moira*, *Simcoe* and *Seneca*, mounting altogether about fifty guns, chiefly carronades and long 6's. This squadron formed no part of the Royal Navy; the vessels were undermanned, the men were untrained, and Earle himself was not a competent teacher. On the twenty-ninth of July with this force Earle undertook to capture the American armed brig *Oneida* then lying at Sacketts Harbour, under the guns of a battery, but after a cannonade which lasted for about an hour, hauled off without having suffered or inflicted any particular damage. The Americans after this attack displayed great vigour in the purchase, equipment and construction of vessels for their

fleet on Lake Ontario. Captain Isaac Chauncey was sent from the Brooklyn navy yard to superintend the work of forming a fleet, and before the end of the season he had accomplished much.

In the early summer, eight American schooners had been chased down the St. Lawrence, while attempting to escape from Ogdensburg, by a flotilla of boats manned by Canadians and commanded by one Jones. Two of the vessels were captured and burnt, and the remainder driven back to Ogdensburg. There, a few days after Earle's attack on Sacketts Harbour, they were joined by the armed schooner *Julia* from the latter place with a large body of volunteers and a rifle corps. Their object was to protect the vessels until they could be armed and enabled to fight their way into the lake, but the armistice which followed shortly made this precaution unnecessary, and while it lasted they made their way unmolested to Sacketts Harbour where they were converted into vessels of war. They were named the *Hamilton*, *Scourge*, *Conquest*, *Tomkins*, *Growler* and *Pert*. These with the *Madison* and *Julia* formed a powerful squadron mounting fifty-four guns, twenty-three of them of heavy calibre, manned by five hundred sailors and marines. Some American writers try to make this squadron appear weaker than that of the British by stating that, exclusive of the *Oneida*, these vessels mounted only five guns each, but they dishonestly conceal the fact that thirty of the thirty-eight guns they carried were long guns, that six of the vessels had each a 32-pounder long gun on deck on a circle, so that it could be fired in any direction, and that the seventh had a 24-pounder mounted in a similar manner. The importance of this will be better understood when it is known that no frigate afloat at that time carried a long gun as heavy as a 32-pounder. The American squadron was greatly superior to the British for fighting purposes, and as a result of this preponderance was able to blockade Earle in Kingston during the last three or four weeks of the season. Chauncey even ventured with his squadron to the mouth of Kingston

harbour, and undertook to attack the *Royal George* there, but he got such a warm reception from the batteries that he became convinced that discretion was the better part of valour and retired with the loss of six or eight killed or wounded. The British suffered no loss whatever.

Turning once more to the military events of the year we find General Dearborn, the commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States in the northern department, with a large force of regulars and an unlimited number of militia at his disposal, with orders to capture Montreal. This city from its situation at the head of ocean navigation, with very inadequate means of defence, and situated not more than forty miles from the American frontier, seemed not only a most desirable prize to the invader but one that might easily be gained. An American army could advance by way of Hudson River and the west side of Lake Champlain to Plattsburg and Rouse's Point, and be within striking distance of Montreal, without encountering an enemy. It was to provide against such an invasion as this that Sir George Prevost had been most anxious to guard, for he was never found wanting in energy when his own safety was involved. A line of posts was formed along the frontier of Lower Canada from Yamaska to St. Regis, consisting of Major De Salaberry's regiment of Canadian *voltigeurs* and part of the embodied militia. At Lacadie, twenty-five miles from the frontier, a brigade of the regular and militia forces was formed under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Young of the 8th Regiment. It consisted of the flank companies of the 8th, 100th and 103rd Regiments, the Canadian Fencibles, the flank companies of the first battalion of embodied militia, and a detachment of Royal Artillery with six field-pieces. The road to the frontier was cut up and rendered difficult to an army by an abattis formed of trees, so that any sudden irruption in that quarter was guarded against. The people in the Lower Province showed a zeal in the defence of their country which was very disheartening to the Americans who had hoped for a different result. In order

to relieve the regulars and enable them to take the field at any moment, the militia of Quebec and Montreal did garrison duty, and continued it as long as the necessity for the employment of their services existed. In September a fifth battalion of militia, afterwards known as the Canadian *chasseurs*, was embodied, principally from the Montreal militia. The North-West Company raised a corps of *voya-*



MAJOR DE SALABERRY

Who commanded the Canadians at La Colle.

geurs, and the merchants and tradesmen of Montreal belonging to the first battalion of the sedentary militia organized themselves into four companies of volunteers for garrison duty and field service in case of emergency. But all these unusual efforts seemed to be necessary, for the enemy was in formidable force upon the frontier. As early as the begin-

ning of September, when the armistice was brought to an end, Brigadier-General Bloomfield had collected about eight thousand men at Plattsburg—regulars, volunteers and militia—besides advance parties at Chazy and Champlain. This American army, therefore, it will be seen, was the most formidable of any in point of numbers, and for that reason the most to be dreaded.

If there had been a master mind at the head of this strong force, which became still stronger before the end of the year, it certainly would have been heard from in connection with some important movement. But it seemed then, and also to a large extent throughout the war, as if the minds of the American commanders could not rise above the idea of a series of raids, which, however annoying they might be to the British, could have no influence whatever on the result of the contest. Of this character was the enterprise of Captain Benjamin Forsyth against Gananoque on the St. Lawrence. This officer, with seventy of his own riflemen and thirty-four militia, crossed over from Cape Vincent on the night of the twentieth of September, and landed a short distance above the village, which they entered while the inhabitants were asleep. There were forty or fifty militia in the place whom they encountered, and they succeeded in killing one man and taking four prisoners. Forsyth's party had only one killed and one wounded. Perhaps to the British wounded should be added Mrs. Stone, wife of Colonel Stone, who was struck by a stray American bullet as she lay on her bed. In Stone's house were found two kegs of fixed ammunition and a few muskets, which were carried off. In some American histories this petty raid figures as a desperate conflict in which sixty British regulars were engaged, although there was not a regular within twenty miles of the place.

A more legitimate operation of war was the attempt of Adjutant D. W. Church to capture a number of British *bateaux*, laden with stores, that were ascending the St. Lawrence in charge of Major Heathcote of the 49th Regiment. A gunboat and Durham boat filled with men went down

the river and encountered the British near Toussaint Island, but were beaten off with the loss of one killed and five wounded. The Durham boat was lost in the fight, and the gunboat also was nearly taken. The expedition was a disastrous failure.

On the fourth of October Colonel Lethbridge, who commanded at Prescott, made an attempt upon the American fort at Ogdensburg. He took with him three hundred and forty men of whom about half were militia, and embarked them in two gunboats and a number of *bateaux*. These were assailed in mid-channel by a heavy fire, and obliged to turn back with the loss of three killed and four wounded. Ogdensburg was too strongly garrisoned at that time to be successfully assailed, for it was held by more than one thousand two hundred men under General Brown.

On the twenty-third of October a party of American militia numbering about three hundred, under the command of Major Young, surprised the guard of the Indian village of St. Regis, which consisted of a detachment of the Canadian *voyageurs* already referred to. Lieutenant Rototte and seven others were killed and the remainder, twenty-three in number, captured. Montigny, the Indian agent, and the Catholic priest were also made prisoners. In this case there was no fighting, the guards were simply surrounded in their houses by ten times their number and shot down. The Americans in their plunderings found in the Indian agent's house a British flag, which that official was in the habit of displaying on Sundays and holidays, and this was heralded all over the United States as "the first flag taken during the war." Major Young not only represented this stolen piece of bunting as a regimental colour, but presented it to the state of New York at a public ceremonial in the following January.

This St. Regis affair led to a speedy retaliation. Captain Tilden, one of the St. Regis heroes, commanded a company at French Mills. On the twenty-third of November, Lieutenant-Colonel McMillan with one hundred and forty men, half regulars and half militia, surprised this party, which

took to a blockhouse, but, finding themselves surrounded, surrendered prisoners of war. Captain Tilden and the whole of his command, forty-three in all, were taken with four *bateaux*, fifty-seven stand of arms and other spoil. An Indian interpreter named Gray who had guided Young to St. Regis was also captured and carried to Quebec where he died. As the sequel showed, the Americans would have done better to have missed this "colour" and left St. Regis, its priest and its flag alone, for most of the St. Regis Indians joined the British and did good service during the war.

While these petty operations were going on along the line of the St. Lawrence, General Dearborn's large army was inactive at Plattsburg. By the beginning of November it numbered about ten thousand, and of this force five thousand seven hundred were regulars. It was not until the sixteenth of that month that Dearborn made a forward movement. On that day with three thousand regulars he advanced almost to Odelltown, which is a short distance across the boundary line of Lower Canada. Major De Salaberry, who commanded the frontier posts, received early information of Dearborn's movement and strengthened the position of La Colle, which was six or seven miles from the American camp at Champlain, by two companies of Canadian *voltigeurs*, three hundred Indians and a small body of militia volunteers from the neighbouring parishes. As an invasion was now considered certain, one thousand nine hundred men, consisting of six hundred militia and one thousand three hundred of the 8th and Glengarry Regiments, were sent across the St. Lawrence and marched to Laprairie so as to be ready to meet the enemy from whatever quarter he might come.

These timely precautions turned out to be quite unnecessary. On the thirtieth of November Colonel Zebulon M. Pike with six hundred of his regulars crossed the La Colle between three and four o'clock in the morning. The enemy were seen by the captain of the day as he was making his rounds, and he heard them cocking their muskets in the woods. He had barely time to apprise the picket of their

danger when the enemy surrounded the guard-hut on every side and discharged their pieces so close to it that they set the roof on fire. The militia and Indians escaped from the building without loss, but the Americans, who had divided into two parties, commenced firing on each other, each party being under the impression that the other was British. This



COLONEL ZEBULON PIKE

Who commanded the United States troops at La Colle.

singular contest was continued for about half an hour and no doubt prodigies of valour were performed. By the time they had discovered their mistake De Salaberry was upon them, and as soon as he approached, Colonel Zebulon Pike and his six hundred regulars ran away in such haste that they left five of their dead and five wounded on the field. These

numbers and losses are given on American authority, but current report at the time placed the American force at more than double the figure named above. This skirmish ended the operations of Dearborn's army which had been so much dreaded. That general immediately returned to Plattsburg where three of the regiments of regulars went into winter quarters, three others were sent to Burlington to winter, the artillery and dragoons went to Greenbush and the militia were sent home.

Although the main object of this history is to give a truthful account of the operations of the war in Canada, some notice of the engagements at sea, from which the Americans professed to derive a full equivalent in the way of consolation for their defeats on land, cannot be omitted. When the war commenced the United States possessed seven ships that were rated as frigates and a number of smaller vessels. As the plunder of the British merchant marine was one of the advantages which the Americans expected to derive from the war, they were naturally prepared to pounce upon their prey at a moment's notice. In June, 1812, Commodore Rodgers with his flagship the *President*, 44, *United States*, 44, *Congress*, 38, *Hornet*, 18, and *Argus*, 16, was waiting at New York ready to sail the moment he heard that war had been declared. On the twenty-first of June, within an hour of the time the news of the declaration of war reached him, he put to sea with his squadron. His object was the capture of the British homeward bound fleet which had left Jamaica some time before convoyed by the frigate *Thalia*, 36, and the sloop *Reindeer*, 18, and which, all unconscious of danger, was then proceeding northwards somewhere in the latitude of New York. This promising scheme, by which Rodgers and his men hoped to be enriched, was spoiled in a very unexpected fashion. When thirty-six hours from port the British frigate *Belvidera*, 36, Captain Richard Byron, was sighted. Captain Byron had not heard of the declaration of war, and when he saw the squadron he stood towards it; but when he observed that three of the ships were frigates, and saw them suddenly take in their studding sails and haul up in

chase of him, he suspected hostility and stood away, going north-east by east, the wind being fresh from the west. The chase lasted until midnight, the American vessels firing on the British frigate, and shots being frequently exchanged between the *President's* bow guns and the *Belvidera's* stern chasers. The latter finally escaped and got into Halifax where she gave the first information of the war. The *President* lost twenty-two killed and wounded, sixteen of them by the bursting of a gun, the loss of the *Belvidera* was seven killed and wounded.

The first frigate action of the war was that between the *Constitution* and *Guerrière* which took place on the nineteenth of August in latitude $41^{\circ} 30'$ north and longitude 55° west. As this contest was a type of the three engagements in which Americans captured British frigates, it is proper to explain the causes of so singular a succession of defeats. At this time the British had nine hundred warships on the ocean, manned by one hundred and forty-six thousand sailors and marines. The supplying of men for so prodigious a fleet out of the population of the British Isles, then much less than half what it is at present, was a most difficult task and impressment had to be resorted to. This system brought into the navy many good and also many worthless men, and even then did not provide a sufficient supply, for the British ships were nearly always short of the complement. Moreover, in consequence of the French fleets having almost disappeared from the ocean, and the exercise of a false economy on the part of the government, gunnery practice was almost entirely neglected. The Americans on the other hand had no difficulty whatever in overmanning the few ships they sent to sea, and in their crews were many men who had been trained in the Royal Navy and had deserted from it.

But a more potent cause of the British defeats was the size, armament and power of the large American frigates, as compared to the British ships they were matched against. The *Constitution*, *United States*, and *President* were sister ships and were the largest and most powerful frigates afloat. The

capture of the *President* by the British in 1814 gave them an opportunity of comparing her with frigates of the class encountered by her sister ships. These American frigates, in addition to their superior size, had timbers, planking and masts as stout as a British 74-gun ship. The *Constitution*, when she fought the *Guerrière*, carried thirty-two long 24-pounders and twenty-two short 32-pounders. Her broadside weight of metal was seven hundred and thirty-six pounds. The *Guerrière* carried thirty long 18-pounders, two long 12-pounders, sixteen short 32-pounders and one long 18. The weight of her broadside was five hundred and fifty-six pounds. The comparative force of the ships was as follows:—

| | Tonnage. | Weight of Broadside. | Number of Men. |
|---------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Constitution</i> | 1,576 | 736 lbs. | 456 |
| <i>Guerrière</i> | 1,338 | 556 “ | 272 |

Yet Lossing, the author of a book on the War of 1812, in the face of these figures, has the assurance to say that the contest was “not really an unequal one,” and to add that the weight of the respective broadsides of the vessels “could not have varied very materially.” Mr. Roosevelt, the president of the United States, who has written a tolerably honest account of the naval operations of the war, admits that the disparity of force was as ten to seven, that is to say that the American ship was superior by nearly one-half. The difference was really much more, as any candid reader can perceive, the *Constitution*, when weight of metal, number of men, size and staunchness are taken into account, being doubly superior to the *Guerrière*. The result might easily have been foreseen. After a stubborn battle which lasted a couple of hours, the British frigate was reduced to the condition of a defenceless hulk by being dismasted, and was compelled to surrender. She had lost seventy-nine men, of which twenty-three were killed or mortally wounded. The *Constitution* lost seven killed and seven wounded. The *Guerrière* was in a sinking condition when she struck her flag, and had to be set on fire and destroyed.

The two other frigate actions of the year, as regards the force of the combatants, resembled that between the *Guerrière* and the *Constitution*. The second one in point of time was fought on the twenty-fifth of October in latitude 29° north and longitude 29° 30' west. The combatants were the British frigate *Macedonian* and the American frigate *United States*. The comparative force of these vessels was as follows:

| | Tonnage. | Weight of Broadside. | Number of Men. |
|----------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>United States</i> | 1,576 | 846 lbs. | 478 |
| <i>Macedonian</i> | 1,325 | 547 " | 301 |

Here the American vessel was superior by 59 per cent. in number of men, by 55 per cent. in weight of metal and by 19 per cent. in tonnage, so that the American frigate was really more than double the force of the *Macedonian* when all the elements of strength are taken into account. After a contest which lasted an hour and a half the British vessel was obliged to strike her colours, after losing her mizzenmast, fore and main topmasts, and most of her rigging. She had forty-three of her crew killed and sixty-one wounded. The American ship lost six killed and five wounded.

The third and last action of the war in which a British frigate was captured was fought between the *Constitution* and the *Java* on the twenty-ninth of December in latitude 13° 6' south and longitude 31° west. The *Constitution* had made a slight change in her armament since her battle with the *Guerrière* by leaving on shore two of her 32-pounder carronades. The following is a comparative statement of the force of the combatants:—

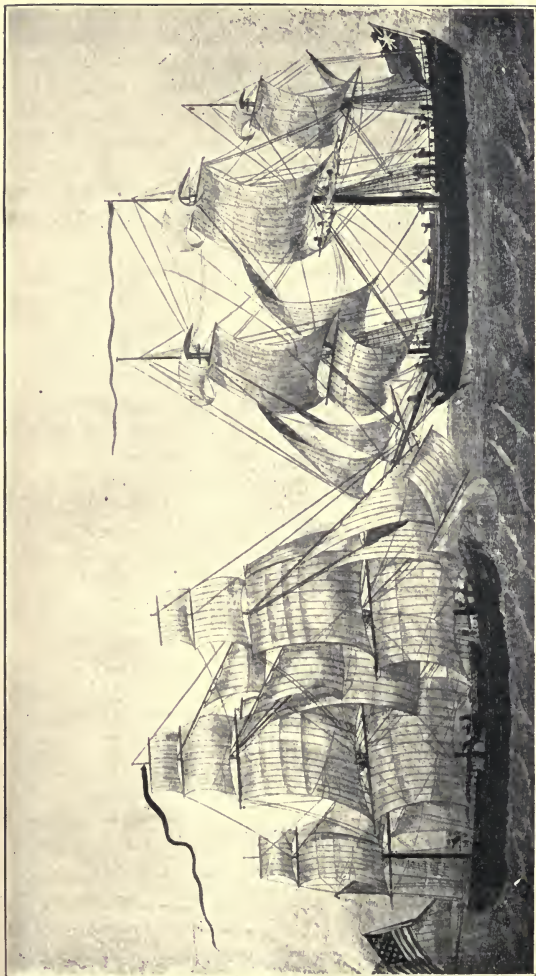
| | Tonnage. | Weight of Broadside. | Number of Men. |
|---------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Constitution</i> | 1,576 | 704 lbs. | 476 |
| <i>Java</i> | 1,340 | 576 " | 377 |

The *Java* carried a number of supernumeraries intended for other ships on the Bombay station, and her crew was a new one and wholly untrianed. The odds against her were about 70 per cent., apparently not quite so much as they

were against the *Guerrière* or *Macedonian*, but really more when the untrained condition of her crew is taken into account. The *Java* was desperately defended and did not strike until she was a riddled and dismasted hulk. She lost in the two hours' engagement forty-eight killed and one hundred and two wounded, and was so badly damaged that she had to be destroyed. The *Constitution* had twelve killed and twenty-two wounded.

In October the American 18-gun corvette *Wasp* captured the British 18-gun brig *Frolic* in latitude 37° north, longitude 65° west. The American vessel carried two long 12-pounders and sixteen 32-pounder carronades. The *Frolic* had two long 6-pounders, sixteen 32-pounder carronades and a 12-pound boat carronade. The broadside weight of metal of the *Wasp* was therefore slightly superior, and she had a crew of one hundred and thirty-five men against one hundred and ten for the British vessel. The latter had lost her mainyard and sustained other damage in a gale, and therefore went into the action in a disabled condition. Nevertheless she was not surrendered until she had become totally unmanageable, and had lost ninety of her crew of whom thirty were killed outright. When the Americans boarded her the only unwounded man who stood on deck was the grim old tar at the wheel. Captain Whinyates and his lieutenant, Wintle, were both so severely hurt that they could not stand without support. The same day the British ship *Poitiers*, 74, recaptured both vessels. The *Wasp* had ten killed and wounded. Certainly the British lost no glory in this affair which would probably have had a very different result had the *Frolic* been in a fit condition to meet an enemy. Mr. Roosevelt thinks the loss of the *Frolic's* mainyard was no detriment as it "merely converted her into a brigantine." On the same principle the loss of a ship's mizzenmast would not impair her efficiency, as it would merely convert her into a brig. Suggestions of this sort can well be left to the reader's contempt.

This ends the story of the first year of the war in which



A NAVAL ENGAGEMENT IN 1812-14

From an old print in the possession of the Toronto Public Library.

the Americans, in their land operations, had reaped nothing but disasters and humiliations. Four different attempts had been made to invade Canada and all had failed. One large army from which much had been hoped had been forced to surrender; the efficient part of a second had been defeated and captured; a third had been repelled after a very brief encounter in which only its advance forces took part, and a fourth had been frightened away from the frontier without any conflict with the British at all.

CHAPTER VIII

OPERATIONS ON THE DETROIT FRONTIER

THE attempt of Hull on the Detroit frontier which had been so disastrously defeated by the promptitude and energy of Brock, was but a part of the movement against the western peninsula. The people of Kentucky and Indiana, as well as of Pennsylvania, were not behind those of Ohio in their eagerness to reap glory in an easily fought campaign. Kentucky alone before war was declared had five thousand five hundred militia and volunteers in the field, which were intended to coöperate with Hull in the conquest of Canada. This number was increased to seven thousand in October, 1812, for Hull's surrender, while it was a humiliation to the people of the union generally, filled the inhabitants of the western states with terror. It caused the Indians to flock to the British standard, and gave the frontier settlers reason to fear that they would seek a bloody revenge for the injuries they had received from the white men.

Before General Brock left Detroit he gave instructions to Colonel Procter to send Captain Muir with a detachment of regulars and Indians to reduce Fort Wayne, which at that time had a garrison of only seventy men. But this enterprise, which must have succeeded, was prevented by the receipt of orders from Sir George Prevost. The governor-general expressed his desire that, although the armistice did not extend to General Hull's command, it should be acted upon by Colonel Procter. That officer was also instructed to refrain from every hostile act, and to restrain the Indians by every means in his power. After the armistice was ended, when Captain Muir advanced towards Fort Wayne, he found

that that post had been heavily reinforced and that General Winchester with two thousand men was in the vicinity. Under these circumstances any attack had necessarily to be abandoned. He returned to Fort Defiance, at the junction of the Miami and Au Glaize Rivers, intending to give battle there, but three-fourths of his Indians at this time deserted him, and he had to retreat twenty miles farther down the Miami. The Indians had become disgusted with the restraint put upon them by the armistice, and they were alarmed by the reports of the mighty host that was coming against them from Kentucky and Ohio. For this state of affairs Sir George Prevost was directly responsible, for there was no reason why he should have insisted on his lieutenants on the Detroit frontier observing an armistice that was not regarded by the enemy.

Governor Harrison of Indiana, "the hero of Tippecanoe," was appointed commander-in-chief of all the Kentucky forces. He was also made a brigadier-general of the United States army, and assigned to the command of the north-western army, which, in addition to the rangers and troops in that quarter, consisted of the volunteers and militia of Kentucky and Ohio, and three thousand from Virginia and Pennsylvania, making his whole force ten thousand men. His instructions were to provide for the defence of the frontiers and to retake Detroit with a view to the conquest of Canada. These instructions were received on the twenty-fourth of September, but all that could be accomplished during the next three months was the destruction of a few Indian towns that had been deserted by their inhabitants, and the burning of their winter supply of provisions. This was the method the government of the United States took to conciliate the Indians, and when the unfortunate red men retaliated after their own fashion, the American people were amazed and horrified. They did not seem to appreciate the fact that to turn an Indian family out of their hut at the beginning of winter, and to destroy the food they had stored up for that inclement season is equivalent to a sentence of death. It would have

been more merciful to kill these poor people outright than to leave them to perish of hunger and cold.

Towards the end of December Harrison had about seven thousand infantry and a body of cavalry and artillery under his command in the North-West. He had his headquarters at Sandusky where he had collected an abundance of ammunition, stores and provisions for the invasion of Canada at Malden. General Winchester, who commanded the left wing of the army, was on the Miami about six miles below the Au Glaize when he received a despatch from Harrison ordering him to press forward to the rapids of the Miami. He was directed to commence building huts so that the British might be deceived into the belief that he intended to winter there; but at the same time he was to prepare sleds for an advance towards Malden, but to conceal from his troops their intended use. Winchester was also informed that the different wings of the army would be concentrated at the rapids, and would proceed from there against Malden as soon as the ice was strong enough to bear them. Winchester had his entire army established at the rapids on January 10th, 1813. A day after this he received a message from Frenchtown on the Raisin River asking him to send a force there as the inhabitants feared an attack by the Indians. He called a council of officers who decided that troops should be sent to Frenchtown, and Colonel Lewis with five hundred and fifty regulars and Kentucky volunteers was entrusted with this duty. Lewis started for Frenchtown, which was thirty-five miles distant, on the morning of the seventeenth of January, and he had not been gone many hours when a reinforcement of one hundred and ten men under Colonel Allen was sent after him. Lewis had instructions to attack and beat "the enemy," and to seize Frenchtown and hold it.

Frenchtown, which contained at that time one hundred and fifty inhabitants, was held by thirty men of the Essex militia under Major Reynolds. They had with them a 3-pounder and were accompanied by a band of two hundred

Indians. This force was encountered by Colonel Lewis at three o'clock on the afternoon of the eighteenth and attacked. The American accounts of this affair are very absurd, for they magnify the little force of Canadian militia nearly ten-fold, and give detailed accounts of desperate charges and counter charges which never took place. The truth was that Major Reynolds, after resisting the enemy as long as he could, and inflicting as much damage upon them as possible, retired to Brownstown, eighteen miles from the scene of action. He had one militiaman and three Indians killed; the Americans by their own account had twelve killed and fifty-five wounded.

Colonel Lewis encamped at Frenchtown and sent to Winchester for reinforcements. The news of his affair with Major Reynolds' detachment, which was magnified into a great victory, made Winchester's Kentucky soldiers fairly wild with excitement. To quote an American writer: "All were eager to press northward, not doubting that the victory at the Raisin was the harbinger of continued success until Detroit and Malden should be in possession of the Americans." Winchester, who was not well pleased at Harrison being placed over him, was anxious to bring on an engagement before his superior could reach him. He hastened to Frenchtown with a reinforcement which brought up the strength of the army there to one thousand men, and encamped on the right of Lewis's forces on the evening of the twentieth of January.

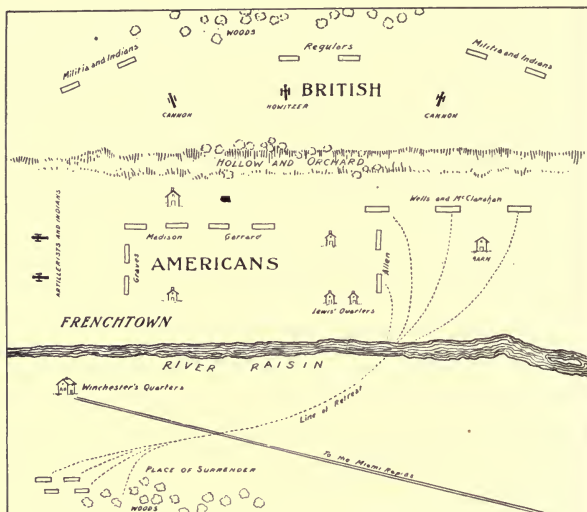
The moment Colonel Procter heard of the occupation of Frenchtown by the Americans, he set out from Malden with all his available force. This, when joined to the detachment at Brownstown, comprised about five hundred white troops and four hundred and fifty Indians. The former consisted of one hundred and forty rank and file of the 41st, forty of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, a few men of the 10th Royal Veteran Battalion, enough artillery to serve three 3-pounders and a 5½-inch howitzer, a number of Canadian sailors, and parts of the 1st and 2nd Essex militia.

This was the army which General Winchester in his report

calls "greatly superior in numbers." Between four and five o'clock on the morning of the twenty-second of January, Procter attacked the American camp. The weather was severe, so no pickets were posted far in advance on the roads, and Procter's sudden assault was almost a surprise. The American right was fiercely assailed and driven in until the troops in that part of the field gave way entirely, and fled to the further side of the Raisin River, where they sought the shelter of the woods. But there was no safety for them there, for the Indians, who had gained their flank and rear, cut them down. The slaughter was great, for the red men who had seen their houses and provisions destroyed by Winchester's men, could hardly be restrained. General Winchester who was with this section of the army, was taken prisoner, as was Colonel Lewis who led the advance on Frenchtown. The left and centre of the American army were posted in a picketed camp which afforded a strong defensive position. This was attacked by the British regulars, but the Americans, who dreaded the vengeance of the Indians, defended themselves with the courage of despair. Colonel Procter, anxious to stay the further effusion of blood, told General Winchester, to quote the language of the latter in his official report, "that he would afford them an opportunity of surrendering as prisoners of war." The American general accepted this offer and sent a flag to his beleagured men ordering them to surrender, which they did. It was impossible for them to escape, and had their resistance been prolonged it would have been difficult to protect them from the Indians.

In this affair the British loss was very heavy, amounting to twenty-four killed and one hundred and fifty-eight wounded, a full third of the number of white troops engaged. Of this loss thirty-eight were of the Canadian militia and sailors. Of the small detachment of the 41st present, fifteen were killed and ninety-seven wounded, and the losses of the few men of the Newfoundland Regiment engaged were equally severe, amounting to eighteen killed or wounded. Ten British and Canadian officers were wounded, one of them, Ensign Kerr

of the Newfoundland Regiment, mortally. The American army was annihilated, and of the whole force of about one thousand, only thirty-three escaped. The killed and missing



THE BATTLE OF FRENCHTOWN

Frenchtown, in what is now the state of Michigan, was a small village containing one hundred and fifty people. The British garrison of thirty-six regulars was driven out of the village on January 18th, 1813. Hearing of this, Colonel Procter marched from Malden to recapture it. He attacked the United States camp on the twenty-second, and inflicted a severe defeat on the enemy under General Winchester.

numbered three hundred and ninety-seven, the wounded twenty-five, and the prisoners, wounded and unwounded, five hundred and thirty-six. The total loss was therefore nine hundred and fifty-eight. These figures are from American authority and are, no doubt, correct. The force thus destroyed comprised the greater part of Colonel Wells's 17th United States Regiment of infantry, the 1st and 5th Regi-

ments of Kentucky infantry, and Colonel Allen's Kentucky Rifle Regiment. The day of the Raisin was a dark and bloody day for Kentucky, and hundreds of its homes were in mourning, for many a youth who went from his father's house with a light heart in search of glory was buried in an unknown grave.

Colonel Procter had now fewer white troops left than the number of his prisoners, and there were rumours that General Harrison was approaching with the other wing of the army of the North-West. For these reasons, and also because he wished to put his captives in a place of safety, he set out on his return to Malden on the day of the battle, taking all the prisoners with him that could be moved, and also the main body of Indians. A few wounded prisoners had to be left behind until a conveyance could be sent for them. They were placed in charge of Major Reynolds and the interpreters of the Indian department, and two of their own surgeons were left with them. On the following day a report that was current of the approach of Harrison caused some of the guards to desert the wounded prisoners, and a few of the latter were killed by straggling Indians who were looking for some person to be revenged upon for the destruction of their homes. This unfortunate affair, for which Procter was certainly not to blame, has given unscrupulous authors like Lossing an opportunity of writing violent tirades against the British and the people of Canada. According to these writers the deaths of the men thus slain were deliberately planned by Procter, who by the same authority, is denounced as a coward. There was certainly nothing of the latter shown in his prompt attack on the superior army of Winchester, but that, perhaps, is as good a name as any to throw at a British officer whom some Americans can never forgive because he defeated them, cutting to pieces or capturing their entire army, and adding another to the list of British triumphs.

Among those who lost their lives was Captain Hart, a Kentucky volunteer officer whose wife was the sister of Henry

Clay. This fact, no doubt, had a good deal to do with the violence of the American press in dealing with the Frenchtown affair. Captain Hart was in a place of safety at the house of a Frenchman in charge of a friendly Pottawatomie chief. There he might have remained without molestation, but he became so much alarmed that he offered the chief one hundred dollars to convey him to Malden. Hart was placed on a horse and was passing through a village when a Wyandot Indian came out and claimed Hart as his prisoner. The Pottawatomie attempted to defend Hart but was overpowered and the American was shot and scalped. As Henry Clay was so powerful and eager an advocate of the war that he may be fairly regarded as its author, it is somewhat remarkable that his own brother-in-law should have been one of its first victims.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the Indians cannot be taught to appreciate the beauties of the rules of civilized warfare, but, being children of nature, they think the right way to deal with an enemy is to kill him and be done with him for good and all. Yet in their dealings with the Americans in the War of 1812, they were far more merciful than the latter were to them. They took prisoners and spared the lives of the wounded, although the Americans never took any Indian prisoners, but killed and scalped all who fell into their hands. The spirit of the Americans towards the Indians is shown by Hull's proclamation in which he said: "No white man fighting by the side of an Indian will be taken prisoner—instant destruction will be his lot." It is shown also by General Smyth's address to the "Army of the Centre," in which he informed his soldiers that he would order "forty dollars to be paid for the arms and spoils of each savage warrior—who shall be killed." This was simply rewarding his men for giving no quarter to the Indians, and the latter doubtless thought that it was proper to reciprocate in kind. That they did not do so, but spared American wounded and prisoners, was due to the influence of the British commanders whose only reward for their leniency has

been the abuse of many writers from the time of the war down to the present day. Instead of assailing Procter, American writers should honour his memory, as but for him, not one of the Kentuckians who were defeated at the Raisin would have escaped; the Indians were bent on their destruction.

The defeat of Winchester completely deranged Harrison's plans of invasion and put an end to further offensive movements until more troops could be brought into the field. The American general retired to the rapids of the Miami, where, on the high ground on the right bank of the river, he established a fortified camp, which, in honour of the governor of Ohio, was named Fort Meigs. Before spring it had become a regular fortification, covering about eight acres of ground and mounting eighteen guns, chiefly 18 and 12-pounders. From this point Harrison was able to keep open communication with Ohio and Kentucky and to operate against Detroit and Malden.

As Procter had information that Harrison was to be heavily reinforced in the spring with a view to invading Canada, he deemed it advisable to attack Fort Meigs before the American force had become too powerful. Accordingly on April 23rd, 1813, he embarked at Amherstburg with four hundred and sixty-one rank and file of the regular troops, comprising twenty-seven of the Royal Artillery, five of the 10th Veteran Battalion, three hundred and seventy-four of the 41st Regiment, fifty-five of the Newfoundland Regiment and four hundred and six rank and file of the militia. The whole number of white troops, including staff and other officers, was nine hundred and eighty-three, and they were accompanied by one thousand two hundred Indians under Tecumseh. Fort Meigs had at this time a garrison of one thousand three hundred men, consisting of two regiments of regulars besides volunteers from Kentucky and Ohio. They were under the command of General Harrison, and reinforcements were daily expected from Kentucky under General Green Clay, which would make Harrison's army far stronger than that of Procter, Indians included.

Procter, who had been made a brigadier-general for his Frenchtown victory, reached the vicinity of Fort Meigs with his little army on the twenty-eighth of April, and batteries were at once commenced on the opposite side of the river. Rain delayed the work, but on the first of May two 24-pounders, three 12-pounders, an 8-inch howitzer and two 5½-inch mortars were mounted and opened fire on the fort. Very little damage was done, however, as a traverse had been erected by the besieged which protected its front. On the following day another battery of three 12-pounders opened on the fort. The same night a detachment of British crossed the river and mounted two 6-pounders and a 5½-inch mortar on the south side of the Miami behind Fort Meigs. That place had been so completely protected by traverses of earth that the fire of the batteries produced but little effect, the guns, with the exception of the 24-pounders not being heavy enough to make much impression on earthworks.

On the evening of the third, General Clay was at the head of the rapids of the Miami with a reinforcement of one thousand three hundred men from Kentucky, who were embarked in eighteen large scows with shields on their sides to protect them against the bullets of the Indians. Harrison received the news of Clay's approach on the evening of the fourth and at once sent out one of his officers, Captain Hamilton, in a canoe to meet Clay and direct him as to the plan of operations he was to adopt. Clay was to land eight hundred of his men on the north side of the river at a point a mile and a half above the British batteries opposite Fort Meigs. These batteries were to be taken, the cannon spiked and the carriages destroyed, and then the troops were to return to their boats and cross to Fort Meigs. The rest of Clay's command was to land on the south side of the Miami and march directly to the fort. Harrison then intended to make a sortie, destroy the British batteries in the rear of the fort and disperse or capture all the British on the south side of the river. The American general was very sanguine of the success of this fine plan, and, as he had been

stimulating the courage of his troops with a series of stirring addresses, it was to be presumed that they would not fail him. In one of these addresses he said to them: "Should we encounter the enemy, remember the fate of your butchered brothers at the river Raisin—that British treachery produced that slaughter." This sounded very much like an invitation to grant the British no quarter. In another Napoleonic general order he said: "Can the citizens of a free country who have taken arms to defend its rights, think of submitting to an army composed of mercenary soldiers, reluctant Canadians goaded to the field by the bayonet, and of wretched naked savages?" This general should have known that the only troops who during the war had to be "goaded to the field by the bayonet," were the American regulars and militia, as witness the orders of Colonel Miller before the battle of Maguaga, of Colonel Van Rensselaer at Queenston, and of General Wilkinson at La Colle.

On the morning of the fifth of May General Clay's army reached the vicinity of the fort, and Colonel Dudley with eight hundred and sixty-six men landed on the north side of the Miami at a place pointed out by Captain Hamilton. They ascended to the plain unobserved by the British and marched straight to the batteries which were manned by only a few gunners. Dudley's men got behind the guns and captured and spiked them without any loss, the main body of the British being at the camp a mile and a half down the river. Dudley now left the larger part of his force under Major Shelby in the captured batteries, and with the remainder advanced against a body of Indians in the rear of the fort who had attacked some of his riflemen. Shelby was soon assailed by two companies of the 41st and a company of militia, the whole numbering less than two hundred rank and file. This gallant little force, which was led by Captain Muir of the 41st, speedily recaptured the batteries, driving the American troops before them and making most of them prisoners. Harrison's Kentucky heroes, "citizens of a free country," were not able to stand for an instant before Muir's "mercenary soldiers and

reluctant Canadians." Dudley was not more fortunate than Shelby had been; he was drawn into an ambuscade by the Indians, and the whole of his command cut to pieces. Dudley himself was killed, and of the eight hundred and sixty-six men who had landed with him only one hundred and fifty escaped.

The remainder of Clay's force, consisting of about four hundred and fifty men, landed on the south side of the river and reached the fort after a sharp skirmish with the Indians. General Harrison ordered a sortie to be made by three hundred and fifty men, nearly all regulars, under Colonel John Miller of the 19th U. S. Regiment. These fell upon one of the British batteries, which was defended by the two flank companies of the 41st Regiment, numbering one hundred and thirty rank and file, under Captain Bullock. The small British force was defeated, the battery captured, and the gun, a 6-pounder, spiked, forty men of the 41st, including two lieutenants and a sergeant being made prisoners. Colonel Miller did not enjoy his triumph long. At this moment two companies of militia, numbering one hundred and thirty rank and file, advanced with three hundred Indians. These with the help of the remnant of the 41st instantly recaptured the cannon and drove the Americans back into Fort Meigs with the loss, according to their own official reports, of twenty-eight killed and twenty-five wounded.

The total loss of the British and Canadians in this affair was fourteen killed, forty-seven wounded and forty made prisoners. Captain Bandy of the militia was mortally wounded and died on the day of the battle. The Americans acknowledged a loss of eighty-one killed, two hundred and seventy wounded, and four hundred and eighty-five of them were made prisoners, making a total loss of eight hundred and thirty-six. Of this number six hundred and ninety-six were lost under Dudley on the north side of the river, eighty-seven in Clay's advance to the fort on the south side of the Miami, and fifty-three in the sortie. Of General Clay's reinforcement

of one thousand three hundred men, only about five hundred got into Fort Meigs, yet even this limited accession of strength gave Harrison a total of more than one thousand seven hundred men, or more than double the number of Procter's white troops. This fact, and other circumstances over which he had no control, made it necessary for General Procter to raise the siege of Fort Meigs. The militia wanted to go home to put in their crops, and the Indian chiefs sent him a deputation counselling him to return, as they could not prevent their people, as was their custom after a battle, returning to their villages with their wounded and their plunder, of which they had taken a considerable quantity from the boats of the enemy. "Before the ordnance could be drawn from the batteries," says Procter in his despatch, "I was left with Tecumseh and less than twenty chiefs and warriors; a circumstance which strongly proves that, under present circumstances at least, an Indian force is not a disposable one or permanent, though occasionally a most powerful aid." Procter was destined to experience the truth of this observation still more forcibly at a later period.

The British general withdrew his force from Fort Meigs on the ninth of May taking with him all his cannon and stores of every kind, and leaving absolutely nothing behind. Lossing attempts to convey a false impression to the minds of his readers by saying that "Procter attempted to bear away from his batteries his unharmed cannon, but a few shots from Fort Meigs made him withdraw speedily." Here, without absolutely stating it and telling a direct falsehood, Lossing leads the reader to believe that Procter's cannon were left behind, the truth being as that general states in his despatch: "I have, however, brought off all my ordnance; and indeed have not left anything behind. Part of the ordnance was embarked under the fire of the enemy." The American general had not the courage to interfere with Procter's departure, except by an ineffectual fire from his cannon. The British retorted in kind, and the last shot they fired from one of their vessels killed half a dozen of the soldiers in the fort;

with this emphatic farewell they sailed away. Procter had failed to capture Fort Meigs; but he had so demoralized the enemy that they were effectually prevented from engaging in a spring campaign against Detroit.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAPTURE OF YORK

HAVING brought the story of the operations on the Detroit frontier down to the early summer of 1813, it now becomes necessary to go back to the beginning of the year for the purpose of relating the occurrences in other parts of the Canadian provinces. The disasters which had befallen their armies in 1812 were very grievous to the people of the United States, and damaging to the prestige of their public men. Dr. Eustis, the secretary of war, was forced to resign to appease the popular wrath, and was succeeded by John Armstrong, who had been minister to France under President Jefferson, and was appointed a brigadier-general at the beginning of the war. Armstrong divided the country into nine military districts, to each of which a general officer of the United States army was assigned, whose duty it was to superintend all the means of defence within his district. This was done to prevent any difficulty arising from the interference of governors of states that were opposed to the war. The failure of the attack on Canada had made the peace party in New England stronger and bolder. Josiah Quincy, whose honesty and patriotism no man could doubt, gave his countrymen his views on the war in a highly exasperating fashion on the floors of Congress. Hildreth says:—"He denounced the invasion of Canada as a cruel, wanton, senseless and wicked attack, in which neither plunder nor glory was to be gained, upon an unoffending people, bound to us by ties of blood and good neighbourhood; undertaken for the punishment over their shoulders of another people three thousand miles off, by young politicians fluttering and cack-

ling on the floor of that House, half hatched, the shell still on their heads and their pin-feathers not yet shed—politicians to whom reason, justice, pity, were nothing, revenge everything.” Speeches of this kind, however, only made the war party more resolute to conquer Canada. Acts were passed to increase the regular army to fifty-six thousand men, all of whom were to be employed in the invasion of Canada. Williams of South Carolina, the chairman of the military committee, voiced the plans and hopes of his belligerent countrymen when he said:—“The St. Lawrence must be crossed by a well appointed army of twenty thousand men, supported by a reserve of ten thousand. At the same moment we move on Canada a corps of ten thousand must threaten Halifax from the province of Maine. The honour and character of the nation require that the British power on our borders should be annihilated in the next campaign.”

The news, which reached Washington in March, of the terrible disasters that had befallen their ally Napoleon in the Russian campaign, in which he lost about four hundred and fifty thousand men, was very disheartening to the American war party. All their hopes of sharing with this Corsican robber in the partition of the British empire suddenly vanished in smoke, and although the United States might continue to play the part of a jackal to Bonaparte, they could now expect very little from him but kicks and contempt. Bonaparte indeed despised his American flatterers as much as he hated republican institutions, and he omitted no opportunity of making them sensible of this fact. Yet the French emperor, although his power was declining, was still formidable and all the energies of Great Britain were expended in efforts to complete his downfall. The war in the Spanish peninsula, where Wellington was engaged in preparing for that glorious campaign which ended in the French armies being driven out of Spain, absorbed nearly all the soldiers that Britain could spare, and therefore the reinforcements which reached Canada in the year 1813 were very inadequate. The first that came was, however, doubly welcome, as much by

reason of its origin as of the spirit that animated it. The King's New Brunswick Regiment, the 104th, in March traversed the wilderness from Fredericton to Quebec and was afterwards sent to Kingston for the reinforcement of Upper Canada. This regiment made the fifth provincial corps of



SIR JAMES L. YEO

He arrived in Canada in May, 1813, with a number of officers of the Royal Navy and four hundred and fifty seamen.

regulars employed in the defence of Canada, the others being the Glengarries, the *voltigeurs*, the Canadian Fencibles and the Newfoundland Regiment. The other regular regiments in

Canada at this time were a battalion of the 1st and 8th Regiments, the 41st, 49th, 100th and 103rd—or six British regular regiments to five colonial corps. The 104th Regiment, when it arrived, was up to its full strength of one thousand men and the Canadian regiments were filled up by recruits during the winter. In May, Sir James L. Yeo arrived from England with a number of officers of the Royal Navy and four hundred and fifty seamen for service on the lakes. Part of the 19th Dragoons and four hundred men of the 41st Regiment also arrived at Quebec in May. The 13th Regiment, the 89th, and the De Watteville Regiment, the latter a foreign corps recruited on the continent of Europe, completed the reinforcements of the year, but neither of the three last named arrived in time to take part in the earlier operations of the campaign. From these facts the real weakness of the British force in Canada will be understood. In the spring of 1813, it is doubtful if there were as many as seven thousand regular troops in Canada, which was menaced with an invasion by three separate armies of Americans who had more than fifty thousand regular soldiers, and an unlimited number of militia at their disposal.

The Americans by means of their spies were kept fully informed of the weakness of the British garrisons in Canada, and this fact induced War Secretary Armstrong to propound a plan of operations with a view to the reduction of the whole of Upper Canada between Prescott on the St. Lawrence and Lake Erie, including all the intermediate posts. "On this line of frontier," he wrote, "the enemy have, at Prescott three hundred, at Kingston six hundred, at George and Erie twelve hundred, making a total of regular troops of two thousand one hundred. Kingston and Prescott and the destruction of the British ships at the former would present the first object; York and the frigates said to be building there the second; George and Erie the third. The force to be employed in this service should not be less than six thousand, because in this first enterprise of a second campaign, nothing must, if possible, be left to chance." Here we have the American plan

of invasion fully disclosed and the strength of the British forces accurately stated.

General Dearborn, who had the army of the north under his immediate command, had a force of upwards of six thousand regulars at the beginning of the year 1813. Early in February orders were given for the concentration of four thousand regulars at Sacketts Harbour and three thousand at Buffalo. The Sacketts Harbour army was to cross the ice to Kingston, capture that place, destroy all the shipping there and then proceed to York and seize the army stores and vessels. This promising scheme was never carried out or even attempted, mainly, it would seem, because of an absurd rumour which was current that Sir George Prevost was at Kingston with six or eight thousand men, preparing for an attack on the American frontier.

Instead of an attack on Kingston by the American army, the Canadians were treated to a raid on Brockville by Major Forsyth, some of whose exploits have already been related. Forsyth was stationed at Ogdensburg, the people of which were so intensely patriotic that it had become a sort of focus for the gathering of raiding parties against Canada. On the night of the sixth of February he left that place with two hundred riflemen and volunteers, and a number of citizens to attack Brockville. As Brockville was without defences or garrison, there was no difficulty in capturing the little village. This heroic American party broke open the jail and liberated the prisoners. They dragged all the adult male inhabitants, fifty-two in number, out of their beds and marched them back to Ogdensburg as prisoners. They also carried away with them one hundred and twenty muskets that they found packed in cases, twenty rifles and two kegs of fixed ammunition. They did not omit to rob the people of Brockville of their horses, cattle, pigs and poultry as well as of any movables they found in their houses.

Lieutenant-Colonel Pierson, who commanded at Prescott, on the nineteenth of February sent Lieutenant-Colonel G. Macdonell, of the Glengarries, with a flag of truce to Ogdens-

burg to protest against such raids as the one above described. This officer, however, received nothing but insolence from the Americans, so it was resolved to clear out this nest of robbers. A day or two later, Sir George Prevost arrived at Prescott on his way to Kingston. Colonel Macdonell, who had succeeded to the command at Prescott, informed him of the recent outrages on the frontier and asked permission to attack Ogdensburg, which the commander-in-chief refused to grant. Colonel Macdonell then represented to Sir George the danger he would be in of being cut off by the enemy, unless a force was sent ahead to occupy the roads, and this Sir George graciously permitted him to do. He very reluctantly agreed to allow Macdonell to make a demonstration on the ice before Ogdensburg, in order to discover if the American troops had left it, but any real attack was absolutely forbidden. Lest there should be any doubt of the nature of his instructions, Sir George forwarded a letter from Flint's Inn, nine miles from Prescott, to Colonel Macdonell, which the latter received in the heat of the battle, repeating his orders not to make any attack. Mr. James, whose books on the military and naval occurrences of the war cannot be too highly estimated, states that he saw this letter before he wrote his history. Sir George's reason for not permitting an attack was that he did not wish to keep alive a spirit of hostility. The Canadian readers will understand from this the kind of odds their fathers had to contend against in the defence of their country. Not only had they to resist an active and unscrupulous enemy, but they had to do so in spite of the opposition of an imbecile commander-in-chief who did not wish to offend the Americans who were engaged in the work of plundering on every convenient occasion.

Fortunately for the people of the St. Lawrence frontier, Colonel Macdonell resolved to turn the demonstration into a real attack. As soon as Sir George Prevost had fairly turned his back on Prescott on the morning of the twenty-second of February, Macdonell began to make his preparations.

Forsyth who commanded at Ogdensburg had been informed by deserters, of the meditated attack, and had plenty of time to take such measures as were considered necessary to resist it. He had eight cannon mounted, six 6-pounders, a 9-pounder and a 12-pounder. Five of these were on the west side of the Oswegatchie River and the other three in the village on the east side. American histories are very reticent as to the number of men they had at Ogdensburg, but as Forsyth's riflemen were all there, besides a company of volunteers and a body of militia, their force cannot be estimated at less than five hundred.

Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell's detachment with which he ventured to assail Ogdensburg numbered four hundred and eighty, and consisted of two hundred and ten regulars and two hundred and seventy militia. It was divided into two columns; the right commanded by Captain Jenkins of the Glengarry Regiment with his own flank company of that excellent corps, and seventy militia; the left under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell himself with one hundred and twenty of the 8th Regiment, forty of the Newfoundland Regiment and two hundred militia. With this column were three guns, a 6-pounder and two 3-pounders, manned by eleven artillerymen. This force appeared about seven o'clock in the morning on the ice which then covered the St. Lawrence, and advanced resolutely towards Ogdensburg. Forsyth had expressed a great desire to meet Macdonell on the ice on the day that the latter went to Ogdensburg with the flag of truce, but when the opportunity came he showed no inclination to carry out his part of the contract, but remained behind the shelter of his batteries. As the river at this point is a mile and a half in width the Americans had a splendid opportunity of decimating the British force with their cannon, and they availed themselves of it to the fullest extent. As they bravely marched across the river, both columns, but especially the right, suffered severely from the enemy's fire.

The duty of the right column, which was directed against the old fort in which Forsyth and his riflemen were stationed,

was to check the enemy's left and intercept his retreat, while the left column advanced and captured the town. Captain Jenkins's column was exposed to a heavy fire from five guns which he attempted to take with the bayonet, although covered by two hundred of the enemy's best troops, but the deep snow on the American side of the river greatly impeded his movements. Advancing as rapidly as the exhausted state of his men would admit, he ordered a charge but had not proceeded many paces when his left arm was shattered by a grape shot; but undauntedly running on with his men, he almost immediately afterwards was deprived of the use of his right arm by a discharge of case shot. Still heroically disregarding the terrible pain which he suffered, he nobly ran on cheering his men to the assault until he fell exhausted by loss of blood. His company gallantly continued the charge under Lieutenant McAuley, but the reserve of militia not being able to keep up with them, they were compelled, by the great superiority in numbers and the fire of the enemy, to retire.

The left column had, in the meantime, fully accomplished its assigned task. Pushing on rapidly it gained the bank of the river, under the direct fire of the enemy's artillery and musketry which were posted on an eminence near the shore. The advance consisting of the forty men of the Newfoundland Regiment and some selected militia under Lieutenant Ridge of the 8th went directly at the enemy, while Colonel Macdonell turned his right with the one hundred and twenty men of the 8th Regiment, and, after a few discharges of the artillery, took them with the bayonet and drove the Americans through the town, the majority escaping to the woods. Some fled across the Oswegatchie River to the fort, and others took shelter in the houses from which they kept up such a galling fire that it was necessary to dislodge them with the British fieldpieces which had been left stuck in the deep snow on landing, but were now brought up from the bank of the river. Having gained the high ground on the brink of the Oswegatchie, opposite the fort, Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell prepared to carry it by storm, but, to give his men time to recover their breath

after their exhausting toil, he sent in a summons to Forsyth requiring the unconditional surrender of the fort. As there was some hesitation about doing this, Macdonell instantly carried the enemy's eastern battery and by it silenced another. He then ordered to the front the detachment of the 8th Regiment and the Highland company of militia under Captain Eustace, and they gallantly rushed into the fort. The enemy did not await the shock of an encounter, but escaped by the opposite entrance and fled to the woods. Forsyth and his men, the heroes of the Brockville raid, never stopped running until they had put nine English miles of ground between themselves and the British.

There was not an enterprise undertaken during the war that reflected more credit on the troops engaged in it than the capture of Ogdensburg. Here was no midnight raid, but a bold assault in the open day upon a defiant enemy strongly posted and with every chance in his favour. Colonel Macdonell truly said that in this affair "the officers and men of the militia emulated the conspicuous bravery of the troops of the line." He might have added that nearly half of the regulars engaged were Canadians or colonists. These were the men of the Glengarry and Newfoundland Regiments, who were not excelled in bravery or discipline by any corps that fought in Canada during the war. The British loss at Ogdensburg amounted to eight killed and fifty-two wounded, of which twenty-five fell on the militia and sixteen on the company of the Glengarry Regiment under Captain Jenkins. This gallant officer, who was a native of New Brunswick and the son of a Loyalist, lost one of his arms, and, to a large extent, the use of the other, yet at the end of the war he had not been promoted to a higher rank. Brave men were plentiful in the British army. Forsyth for his hen-stealing raid on Brockville, where no opposition was encountered, and no risk run, was made a lieutenant-colonel, which goes to show that an American colonel during the War of 1812 was about the cheapest article of manufacture extant.

The Americans lost in the Ogdensburg affair five killed and fifteen wounded, and seventy-four of them, including four officers, were taken prisoners. Twelve pieces of artillery were captured, three of them of brass. Of the iron pieces, two, a 12-pounder and a 6-pounder, had been taken at Burgoyne's surrender. The other spoils were one thousand four hundred stand of arms with accoutrements, two stand of colours, three hundred tents, a large quantity of ammunition and camp equipage, with beef, flour, pork and other stores. All this public property was carried over to Prescott. Two armed schooners and two large gunboats that were fast in the ice were burnt and the same fate befell the two barracks. During the war there were no more raids from Ogdensburg against defenceless Canadian villages, nor was any attempt made to fortify it. Indeed this could hardly have been done, for the place was now commanded by Fort Wellington on the Prescott side, which had been garnished by the guns taken by the brave and enterprising Macdonell.

Although Secretary Armstrong's plan for the capture of Kingston had not been carried out, the designs of the enemy against western Canada were not abandoned. By the middle of April, General Dearborn had at Sacketts Harbour five thousand effective regulars and two thousand militia, in addition to one thousand three hundred sailors under Commodore Chauncey who commanded the fleet. As the Americans had now control of Lake Ontario it was resolved, first to send an expedition to capture York, and then to cross the lake and reduce Fort George. York, the capital of Upper Canada, was then a town of nine hundred inhabitants situated just to the west of the Don, on a site now wholly covered by a part of the city of Toronto. At York a 24-gun ship was being built for the lake fleet, and a considerable quantity of ammunition and supplies was stored there, yet so great was the neglect with which this important post was treated by Sir George Prevost, that it was almost without defence. Two miles to the westward of the town was old Fort Toronto, erected by the French, which had been suffered to go to ruin.



WESTERN ENTRANCE TO TORONTO BAY, LOOKING WEST FROM THE BAY, AS IT APPEARED IN 1838
The Fort and Barracks overlooked this entrance.—From a water-colour in the possession of the Toronto Public Library.

Half a mile east of this was the Western battery; beyond it was the Half Moon battery and still further east, on the borders of a small stream which flowed through a deep ravine, were a picketed blockhouse and some intrenchments. Here the garrison was stationed. It consisted of about sixty men of the Glengarry Regiment, nearly a company of the Newfoundland Regiment, and a few artillerymen. The 3rd York militia about three hundred strong was also stationed there. The entire force available for the defence of the place did not exceed four hundred and twenty men. Very few guns were mounted on the fortifications, and most of these were without trunnions and were set on wooden stocks with iron hoops. The 10-gun brig *Duke of Gloucester*, which was in port for repairs, supplied a few 6-pounders which were mounted on temporary field works, but the heavy carronades intended for the new ship that was being built at York, which might have been placed in batteries, had been thrown carelessly in the mud, where they lay covered with ice and snow.

Such was the defenceless condition of the capital of Upper Canada in the spring of 1813. For the weakness of the garrison and for the incredible folly of building a new warship at a place so poorly guarded, Sir George Prevost must be held responsible, but Major-General Sheaffe, who commanded at York, was also greatly to blame because he did not put the limited means at his disposal to a better use. Had the guns of the new ship been mounted in battery, as they should have been, York could have been held even against the overwhelming odds brought against it, and a long train of misfortunes which followed its capture would have been avoided.

On the twenty-fifth of April, the American expedition against York set sail from Sacketts Harbour. Commodore Chauncey, who commanded the fleet, had fourteen vessels, thirteen of them ships of war, mounting eighty-four guns, eleven of them long 32 and 24-pounders, with crews numbering in the aggregate seven hundred men. The number of troops on board was, according to Commodore Chauncey's official report "about one thousand seven hundred," but it

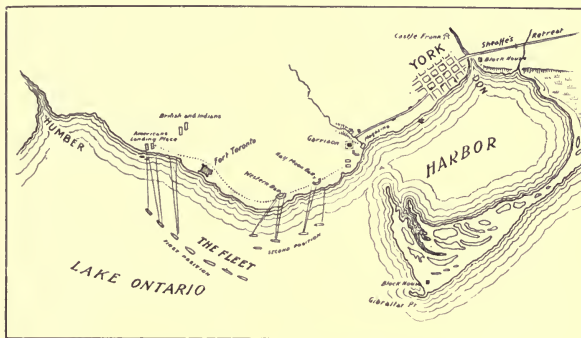
was probably more than two thousand, for it embraced Forsyth's riflemen, Colonel McClure's volunteers, four regiments of United States infantry, the 6th, 15th, 16th, and 21st, and a considerable body of artillery. This formidable force made its appearance before York in the early morning of the twenty-seventh of April and by seven o'clock the troops commenced to land. At this time the 8th Regiment was being transferred from Kingston to Fort George on the Niagara frontier, and two companies of this gallant corps, numbering one hundred and eighty rank and file, had halted at York the evening before the Americans arrived. This increased the number of regulars available for the defence of the place to about three hundred men, but it would have been better if they had been absent, as thereby valuable lives would have been saved which were sacrificed in a hopeless attempt to hold, against overwhelming numbers, a place that was indefensible. In addition to the six hundred regulars, militia and dockyard men at York, there were about fifty Indians under Major Givins.

The Americans effected a landing about half a mile to the west of old Fort Toronto, under the protection of the guns of the fleet. The first party to land was Forsyth's riflemen two hundred and fifty strong. Major Givins with forty of his Indians was the only force present to oppose them at that point, the company of Glengarry Light Infantry which had been ordered to support them having by some mistake been led in another direction, so that it was late in coming into action. By the time the Glengarry company had reached the point of attack, Forsyth's men had been reinforced by a battalion of infantry under Major King, and the invaders were too powerful to be successfully resisted. The main body of the enemy under General Pike was speedily landed with the artillery and advanced along the shore, but they had not proceeded far when they encountered the British reinforcements in a thick woods. These consisted of the one hundred and eighty men of the 8th Regiment already mentioned, forty men of the Newfoundland Regiment and two hundred

and fifty men of the 3rd York militia. These with the Gleggarry company and the Indians formed a body of less than six hundred men, or about one-third of the force of Americans now landed. Yet against such overwhelming odds they maintained a long and obstinate contest which was not terminated until they were fairly overpowered by weight of numbers. More than once the enemy was driven back by their gallant charges, but the heavy losses they had suffered at length made it necessary for them to retire to the Western battery which was then engaged with the enemy's vessels. Here a stand was to have been made, but as the Americans approached, the magazine, the head of which had been carelessly left open, blew up, killing and wounding about forty men, and so seriously damaging the battery that it became untenable. The cannon were immediately spiked and the work abandoned.

The contest had by this time been maintained for about seven hours, and General Sheaffe became convinced that his numbers and means of defence were inadequate to the task of keeping possession of York against the vast superiority of force brought against it. The troops were withdrawn towards the town and were finally ordered to retreat on the road to Kingston, the new ship on the stocks and the naval stores were destroyed, and the powder magazine in the battery near the barracks was blown up. This last act proved extremely disastrous to the Americans. They had cautiously approached the battery and Lieutenant Riddle had been sent forward to reconnoitre and ascertain the strength of the garrison, while their main body remained halted, when the magazine blew up with a prodigious shock and with dreadful effect. It is said to have contained five hundred barrels of gunpowder, and an immense quantity of shot and shell, and the latter with the stone and timber from the building were scattered in every direction over a space of several hundred yards. Fifty-two of the Americans were instantly killed, and one hundred and eighty others were wounded, many of them mortally. The terrified invaders

scattered in dismay in every direction, and it took their officers a long time to rally them although none of the British were near. Among the mortally injured were General Pike and his two aides. The former was sitting on a stump, with his staff standing about him, engaged in questioning a British sergeant who had been made prisoner, when a heavy mass of



MAP SHOWING THE ATTACK ON YORK (TORONTO) IN 1813

stone struck him on the back and crushed him. He was removed to one of the vessels but died within the hour.

When the Americans had recovered from the panic into which they had been thrown by the explosion, they advanced towards the town, where they were met by Lieutenant-Colonel Chewett and Major William Allan of the 3rd York militia, who proposed a capitulation. The terms, which were speedily agreed upon, were that the troops at the post, regulars and militia, and the naval officers and seamen should be surrendered as prisoners of war; that all public stores, naval and military, should be given up; that all private property should be guaranteed to the citizens, and that the papers belonging to the civil officers should be retained by them. The number of prisoners surrendered under this capitulation was two hun-

dred and ninety-two, viz., two hundred and sixty-five officers and men of the 3rd York militia, twenty-one officers and artificers of the provincial navy, and six British regulars. The total loss of the regulars at York was sixty killed, thirty-four wounded, forty-three wounded and prisoners, ten prisoners and seven missing, a total of one hundred and fifty-four, or one-half of the regular force engaged. Counting the missing as prisoners, the total number taken by the Americans of militia and regulars, under the capitulation and outside of it, was three hundred and forty-six. General Sheaffe, with a negligence too common among the British officers at that period, makes no mention of the killed and wounded among the militia, but the number was about fifty. Among those slain was Mr. D. Maclean, the clerk of the House of Assembly, who had attached himself to the 8th Regiment as a volunteer. In this act, as well as by the manner of his death, he well illustrated the spirit of the Canadian people.

General Sheaffe with the remnant of his regulars now reduced to one hundred and eighty men, including thirty-four wounded, crossed the Don and retreated to Kingston which was reached in safety. When a few miles from York the light company of the 8th Regiment was met with on its way to Fort George. It retired with General Sheaffe's little force, and covered its retreat which was effected without molestation. The Americans lost at York, in killed and wounded, two hundred and eighty-six, of which sixty-six were killed on shore and seventeen killed or wounded in the fleet. The prisoners taken by them were paroled, and, as the *Duke of Gloucester* was unseaworthy without large repairs, the value of the spoil taken was very slight. It was here that they committed an act of vandalism that brought upon the American people at a later day severe retribution. They set fire to the parliament buildings and these with their contents were entirely consumed. These buildings consisted of two handsome halls with convenient offices for the accommodation of the legislature and courts of justice. The library and all the papers and records be-

longing to these institutions were consumed at the same time. The church was robbed and even the town library pillaged. "Commodore Chauncey" says Colonel John Clark in his memoirs, "was so ashamed of this last transaction, that he endeavoured to collect the books belonging to the



BISHOP STRACHAN

In 1811, Lieutenant-Governor Gore offered him the parish of York, and Brock offered him the chaplaincy of the troops. He accepted and reached York from Cornwall in 1812. In April, 1813, he was most active during an attack upon the town, and was one of those who conducted the negotiations for capitulation. The people owed much to his activity and fearless courage.

town and legislative library, and actually sent back two boxes filled with them; but hardly any were complete. Much private property was plundered and several houses left in a state of ruin." It was thus that the Americans observed the terms of the capitulation by which the safety of all private property and of the papers belonging to the civil officers was guaranteed.

The capture of York was the first serious misfortune that befell the British in Canada during the war, and it was one that might have been prevented. If York was not worth holding, there was no necessity for keeping troops there, but if it was worth holding, it should have had proper defences. If General Sheaffe, instead of a few pop-gun 6-pounders, with which he armed the batteries, had placed upon them the guns of the new ship that was being built, Chauncey's fleet would have been forced to keep at a respectable distance and a landing could hardly have been effected. These guns comprised a long 24-pounder, eight long 18, four short 68, and ten short 32-pounders. With such a battery as that at the entrance of the harbour, York would have been safe. General Sheaffe, who had been made a baronet of the United Kingdom for his services at Queenston, was not afforded another opportunity of mismanaging the military affairs of Upper Canada, but was soon afterwards superseded in the chief command of the province by Major-General De Rottenburg.

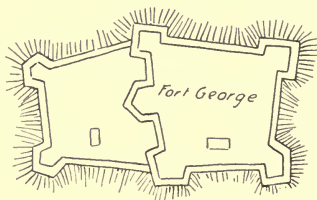
CHAPTER X

FORT GEORGE AND SACKETTS HARBOUR

As the Americans had no intention of holding York, their expedition to that place can only be regarded in the light of a raid for the destruction of property. They now proceeded to prepare for the main object of the campaign, the occupation of the Niagara frontier. Dearborn and Chauncey were detained in York by adverse winds and bad weather until the eighth of May, when they crossed the lake and encamped their troops at Four Mile Creek to the east of Fort Niagara. More troops and supplies were then hurried forward from Sacketts Harbour, and by the twenty-sixth of May, the day before the attack, there were about six thousand American soldiers available for an attack on Fort George in addition to the seamen of the fleet. These consisted of three brigades of infantry under Generals Boyd, Winder and Chandler, besides riflemen and artillery. There was also the garrison of Fort Niagara under General Morgan Lewis, and a reserve formed of the marines and seamen of the fleet and Macomb's regiment of artillery. A sufficient number of boats had been built to embark the whole force at once.

Against these extensive preparations for the conquest of Canada, the British had very little to show. The whole British force on the Niagara frontier was about one thousand eight hundred regulars and six hundred militia. The former consisted of the 49th Regiment and of detachments from the 8th, 41st, Glengarry and Newfoundland Regiments, and the Royal Artillery. The militia were from the counties of Norfolk, Lincoln and York. These troops were under

the command of Brigadier-General John Vincent. At Fort George, the point of attack, were eight companies of the 49th, five companies of the 8th, three companies of the Glengarry and two of the Newfoundland Regiment, a few men from the 41st Regiment, and thirty of the Royal Artillery with two, three, and five 6-pounders and a 5½-inch howitzer. The whole numbered less than one thousand rank and file of regulars. There were also at Fort George three hundred and fifty militia and fifty Indians. Nor did



PLAN OF FORT GEORGE

the character of the defences make amends for the inadequacy of the force. Four of the 24-pounders captured from Hull had been mounted on Fort George, but that work was so badly situated that it did not command the whole of the lake shore within the range of its cannon, as it should have done. A fifth 24-pounder was mounted *en barbette* on a battery near the lighthouse, half a mile to the north of Newark. A 9-pounder was also similarly mounted near One Mile Creek to the westward of Newark, the point where the Americans landed.

On the morning of the twenty-seventh all of the troops of the enemy with their artillery were embarked in the numerous boats and in the armed vessels, and before four o'clock the whole flotilla moved towards the mouth of the Niagara River. The morning was calm and foggy, a circumstance which proved of great advantage to the invaders as it

prevented the cannon of Fort George from playing upon them as they took their stations. As the sun rose the fog cleared away and disclosed the enemy in position for the attack. The schooners *Julia* and *Growler* were placed at the mouth of the Niagara River to silence the 24-pounder mounted *en barbette* near the lighthouse. Each of these vessels carried a long 32-pounder and a long 12-pounder, so that each was double the force of the battery. The *Ontario*, which also mounted a long 32-pounder and a long 12-pounder, took up a position north of the lighthouse so as to enfilade the same battery and cross the fire of the other two. The 24-pounder, which was manned by militia artillery, had to be spiked and abandoned after the cannonade had lasted about fifteen minutes. Mr. James, in his "Military Occurrences" expresses the opinion that this gun should have sunk one or two of the enemy's schooners and hints that those who manned it did not do their duty. But it must be remembered that the 24-pounder, besides the direct attack by the three long 32-pounders and three long 12-pounders on the schooners, was commanded by the guns of Fort Niagara, and exposed to deadly discharges of grape from that quarter. There is no doubt that the gun was worked as long as possible by the militia who manned it.

The schooners *Tompkins* and *Conquest* were stationed near One Mile Creek so as to command the 9-pounder mounted there, which was also manned by militia artillery. These vessels each carried a long 32-pounder, a long 12-pounder and four long 6-pounders. The point of landing for most of the troops was near this battery, and, for the purpose of covering this movement, the *Hamilton*, *Asp* and *Scourge* took stations as close to the shore as the depth of the water would allow. These vessels carried between them two long 32-pounders, two long 24-pounders, eight long 6-pounders and eight 12-pounder carronades. The ship *Madison*, carrying twenty-four 32-pounder carronades, brig *Oneida*, with sixteen 24-pounder carronades, and schooner *Lady of the Lake* with a long 9, were also placed so as to sweep the

shore and do as much damage as possible to the British. With such powerful protection and such an immense superiority in numbers the Americans could well afford to be cool and confident in their movements.

The Americans had judiciously chosen a landing-place which put the town of Newark between them and Fort George, and thereby effectually prevented the fire of the latter from reaching them. General Dearborn, the American commander, on this occasion, as at York, took good care not to expose his valuable person to injury, but allowed his adjutant-general, Colonel Winfield Scott, to lead the attack. The force under Scott's immediate command numbered, according to American authority, five hundred, comprising the 2nd United States artillery acting as infantry, Forsyth's riflemen, and detachments from infantry regiments. They were supported by General Lewis's division with Porter's command of light artillery. These were followed by the brigades of Generals Boyd, Winder and Chandler.

Practically these troops all landed about the same time. The level plateau to the north of Newark was so thoroughly swept by the fire from the American vessels that it was almost impossible for troops to face it, and the enemy, therefore, had little difficulty in reaching the shore, which was entirely bare of British soldiers. The place of landing was at a point about half a mile to the westward of the light-house, and not far from a ravine where the British advance, composed of about two hundred rank and file of the Glengarry and Newfoundland Regiments under Captain Winter, and forty Indians under Norton, was stationed. This detachment inflicted some loss on Scott's men as they approached, and delayed the landing for a short time by their fire, but such a shower of grape was turned upon them from the vessels that they were obliged to fall back upon the left column, which was stationed in another ravine about a quarter of a mile in their rear. This column was composed of three hundred and twenty rank and file of the 8th Regiment and one hundred and sixty militia with three light

fieldpieces manned by a few men of the Royal Artillery and 41st Regiment. It was commanded by Colonel Myers, the acting quartermaster-general. The 9-pounder mounted near the place of landing had by this time been effectually silenced by the killing or wounding of all the militia artillery who manned it, so that General Boyd's brigade was able to reach the shore almost without opposition. The brigades of Winder and Chandler followed in quick succession.

When the enemy to the number of about four thousand had landed, they advanced in three solid columns, their right covered by a large body of riflemen, and their left and front by the fire of the shipping and the guns of Fort Niagara. On the plateau they encountered the little detachment of Colonel Myers, which, united to the remnant of the advance party, numbered about six hundred and fifty rank and file. The struggle that ensued was fierce and illustrated the bravery of the British troops and Canadian militia in the most striking manner. Despite the dreadful losses they suffered by grape and round shot from the enemy's vessels, they drove back the Americans several times, and only gave ground when compelled to do so by the thinning of their ranks and the overwhelming numbers of the foe. The British force lost about two-thirds of its strength. Of the three hundred and twenty men of the 8th Regiment engaged, two hundred and two were killed or wounded. Of the two hundred of the Gleggarry and Newfoundland Regiments one hundred and fourteen were placed *hors de combat*, while the killed and wounded among the militia amounted to eighty-five out of the one hundred and sixty engaged. Who will say that the glory was not equal where the losses were so fairly balanced? The Canadian militia at Newark, as in all the battles of the war, emulated the steadiness of the disciplined regulars, and showed themselves worthy of their brave fathers who settled the wilderness of Upper Canada. Colonel Myers was wounded in three places and obliged to quit the field. Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey, the deputy adjutant-general who commanded the right column, succeeded Colonel Myers, leaving

his own column in charge of Lieutenant-Colonel Plenderleath with orders to move it forward. This column, which consisted of four hundred rank and file of the 49th Regiment and eighty militia, advanced to the support of the left and protected its retreat, which had now become necessary. General Vincent, seeing the hopelessness of further prolonging the contest, ordered his men to retire to the Indian council house half a mile to the rear of Newark, and about the same distance from Fort George. Here, while awaiting the advance of the enemy, it was learned that an American force had been sent to turn the right flank of the British and cut off their retreat to Burlington Heights. As Fort George was untenable, not a moment was to be lost. Orders were sent to its small garrison of fifty of the 49th Regiment and eighty militia to evacuate it, after blowing up its magazines and spiking its guns. Messengers were also despatched in haste to Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp, who commanded at Fort Erie, and to Major Ormsby at Chippawa directing them to evacuate their posts immediately and march to Beaver Dam, sixteen miles from Fort George. General Vincent now retired with his sadly reduced army to Beaver Dam, which was reached about eight o'clock the same evening. There he was joined at a later hour by all the detachments from Chippawa to Fort Erie under Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp, as well as by the light infantry and one battalion company of the 8th and a few sailors under Captain Barclay, who had been escorted from Twenty Mile Creek by Captain Merritt of the Niagara Dragoons.

The contest at Newark lasted from three to four hours, and reflected as much credit on the British and Canadian troops engaged in it as it was possible to obtain in a battle that was lost. The regulars had fifty-two killed outright and three hundred and six wounded or missing, a total of three hundred and fifty-eight. The militia lost upwards of one hundred in killed and wounded, although not more than two-thirds of the three hundred and fifty on the field were closely engaged. Lossing, after correctly stating the number

of the militia at Newark as three hundred and fifty, tells his readers four pages farther on that five hundred and seven of the militia were made prisoners. None of the unwounded militia were made prisoners, and the only unwounded prisoners taken were a few men of the 49th Regiment, who delayed their retirement from Fort George until it was too late. General Dearborn in his official despatch only claims one hundred unwounded prisoners, which is more than double the real number. But for a week after the battle of Newark his officers were engaged in visiting all the farm-houses on the Niagara frontier, and in paroling all their male inhabitants, so it is quite possible that as many as five hundred and seven names were obtained in this way. The Americans state their own losses at Newark as forty killed and one hundred and eleven wounded, which shows that despite the advantages of their position and the protection they received from their fleet, they were severely handled by the small force opposed to them.

The result of the capture of Fort George was the occupation by the Americans of the whole Niagara frontier. This result would not have been attained but for the loss of the control of Lake Ontario, the preceding autumn. Had Sir George Prevost been an active officer he would have seen that this loss was promptly repaired, and measures taken to again obtain control of the lake as soon as navigation opened. But of the two new vessels laid down for the reinforcement of the British fleet, neither was completed when the lake harbours were clear of ice, and one, as has been seen, was destroyed when York was taken. The other, which was named the *Wolfe*, was not ready for service until the end of May, although Sir James Yeo, who was to command the British fleet on Lake Ontario, had been at Kingston as early as the tenth of that month. This delay was fatal to Newark and Fort George. A vigilant commander-in-chief would have had both his ships built at Kingston and one of them at least ready for sea at the very earliest opening of lake navigation. Had this been done, York could not have been

attacked and the invasion of the Niagara frontier would have failed.

On the very day that Fort George was captured by the Americans, Sir George Prevost and Sir James Yeo set out on an expedition from Kingston which was to illustrate in a striking manner the entire unfitness of the former for the command of any enterprise which demanded energy and daring. Sacketts Harbour, although in April it was occupied by five thousand regulars, two thousand militia and one thousand three hundred sailors, had been so denuded of its troops by the expedition against Fort George, that Sir James Yeo believed it could be taken if vigorously attacked. The commander-in-chief gave his consent to an attempt on the place, but destroyed all hope of the success of the expedition by undertaking to lead it himself. On the evening of the twenty-seventh of May, Sir James Yeo's fleet set sail for Sacketts Harbour. The land forces on board consisted of the grenadier company of the 100th Regiment, a section of the 1st (Royal Scots), two companies of the 8th, four of the 104th, two of the Canadian *voltigeurs* and one company of the Glengarry Light Infantry, with two 6-pounders and their gunners, numbering altogether about seven hundred and fifty rank and file. About forty Indians also accompanied the expedition with their canoes. Before noon on the following day the British fleet was off Sacketts Harbour, the breeze was moderate, the weather fine and bright and everything favorable for an attack. Sir George Prevost seems also to have thought the time suitable, for the fleet was ordered to stand in close to the shore, and, as the vessels lay to, the troops were transferred to the boats. When they had been in them for some time awaiting the signal to advance they were perplexed and astonished by an order to return to the fleet. They were again placed on board the ships which now stood away from Sacketts Harbour. The cause of this sudden abandonment of the attempt to land on that occasion has never been satisfactorily explained. American writers attribute it to the appearance of a flotilla of nine-

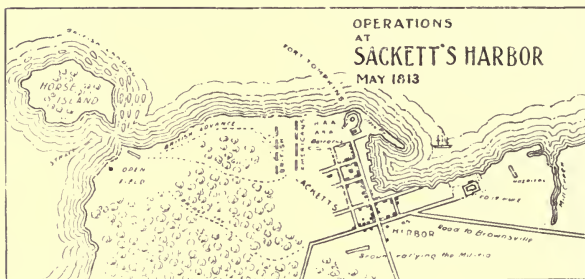
teen American gunboats off Stoney Point. These boats contained a detachment of dismounted dragoons for Sacketts Harbour, and as soon as the Indians saw them they gave chase. Seven of the boats escaped, but the other twelve with seventy of their occupants were captured by Lieutenant Dobbs of the *Wolfe* with the ship's boats, which went in support of the Indians.

Had Sacketts Harbour been attacked the first day the fleet appeared, it would have been captured almost without a blow. Then the fleet could have approached the shore and shelled the Americans out of their works while the British effected a landing. The defenders of the place did not expect an attack and were, in a large measure, unprepared for it. But the kindness of Sir George Prevost, who did not wish to offend the Americans, or keep alive a spirit of hostility, gave them ample warning, and, during the afternoon and night of the twenty-eighth, reinforcements were hurried to Sacketts Harbour from the outlying country. It is not unlikely that Sir George Prevost would have carried his consideration for the Americans so far as to spare them any attack whatever but for the strong remonstrances of Sir James Yeo, who did not understand and could not be made to see the beauties of the commander-in-chief's system of making war. It was, therefore, settled that the attempt was to be made on the morning of the twenty-ninth.

The defences of Sacketts Harbour consisted of Fort Tompkins, a considerable work comprising a strong blockhouse and surrounding intrenchments on the west side of the harbour, and Fort Volunteer on the east side of the harbour. The latter was surrounded by a ditch with a strong line of picketing. The garrison, according to the statement of the American general, Wilkinson, on the morning of the attack numbered one thousand three hundred men, of which only three hundred and fifty were militia. There were three hundred and thirteen light dragoons, one hundred and forty-two artillery three hundred and thirty-two infantry and one hundred and sixty-five Albany volunteers, or nine hun-

dred and fifty regularly trained soldiers, besides the militia. The defenders of Sacketts Harbour were nearly twice as numerous as the attacking force, which numbered less than seven hundred and fifty.

At dawn on the twenty-ninth the British embarked in thirty-three boats, and accompanied by two small gunboats advanced towards Sacketts Harbour. There was not a breath of wind stirring, and owing to this fact the vessels of the fleet were becalmed eight miles away, and, therefore, were unable to take any part in the attack. The only artillery with the land force, two 6-pounders with the men who manned the guns, was on board a light schooner which was expected to reach the landing-place at the same time as the infantry, but instead of this being the case, the vessel did not get to the shore at all, so the attack had to be made without artil-



lery. Thus, owing to the stupidity, or worse, of Sir George Prevost, the success of the enterprise was rendered almost impossible.

The British landed on Horse Island, under the fire of a long 32-pounder on Fort Tompkins, and such field-guns as the Americans could bring to bear on them. The island, which is two thousand yards to the west of Fort Tompkins, is separated from the mainland by a narrow strait, which

is always fordable and sometimes almost dry. This strait, which with the approach formed a causeway four hundred yards in length, had to be traversed by the attacking column in the face of the Albany volunteers and the militia, numbering altogether about five hundred, who with a 6-pounder occupied a favourable position on the shore for destroying the British as they advanced. They were posted behind a ridge of gravel which afforded them an excellent shelter, and as they had been talking in the most valiant manner and appeared to be consumed with martial ardour, it was expected they would make a desperate stand. But the moment the British approached, the grenadiers of the 100th Regiment gallantly leading, the valiant militia became panic-stricken and fled in wild confusion, leaving their 6-pounder behind them. That no injustice may be done to these paladins of New York state, it will be proper to quote what an American author says of their conduct. "General Brown," says this writer, "expected the militia would have remained firm until the enemy were finally on the mainland. But their movement was so sudden, general and rapid, that he found himself completely alone, not a man standing within several rods of him. Stung by this shameful conduct, he ran after the fugitives and endeavoured to arrest their flight. His efforts were unavailing. Forgetful of their promises of courage, and unmindful of the orders they had received to rally in the woods in the event of their being driven back, they continued their flight until they were sure of being out of harm's way. Some of them were not heard of again during the day."

The British, after reaching the mainland, separated into two columns, the left, under Colonel Young of the 8th with half of the force, penetrated the woods to the left towards Fort Tompkins by a direct route parallel to the shore, while the remainder, which formed the right column under Major Drummond of the 104th, took a path which led to the right, and through which the Americans had fled. Colonel Young in his advance was assailed by five hundred men of

the dismounted dragoons, regular infantry and volunteers, who, firing from behind trees, inflicted considerable loss on the left column, but they were speedily driven back on the main body. Major Drummond with the right column, which had met with hardly any opposition, now joined Colonel Young, and the whole force advanced against the Americans and compelled them to take refuge in the log barracks and stockaded fort, leaving one of their guns behind them. So complete was their defeat and so hopeless seemed the prospect of holding Sacketts Harbour, that Lieutenant Chauncey set fire to the naval barracks and storehouses and to the captured schooner *Duke of Gloucester*, as well as to the *General Pike*, the new warship then on the stocks. At this moment the good genius of the Americans in the shape of the commander-in-chief interfered to save them from inevitable defeat. Sir George Prevost with victory in his grasp ordered a retreat. It was in vain that the brave Major Drummond of the 104th, who afterwards fell like the hero that he was in the foremost ranks at Fort Erie, remonstrated with the general and offered to put him in possession of the fortifications if he would give him but a few minutes. He was rudely silenced by his timid leader and told to obey his orders and learn the first duty of a soldier. The orders were obeyed and the humiliated troops returned to their ships, retreating before an enemy that had not dared to look them in the face.

The British loss at Sacketts Harbour was heavy and amounted to fifty killed, one hundred and ninety-five wounded and sixteen missing, a total of two hundred and sixty-one. The American loss was forty-seven killed, eighty-four wounded and thirty-six missing or one hundred and sixty-seven in all. When the British retired, the Americans succeeded in extinguishing the flames on the *Pike* and *Duke of Gloucester*, but the barracks and storehouses were destroyed and with them property valued at half a million dollars. But for the weakness of Sir George Prevost, the disgraceful result at Sacketts Harbour would have been changed into a

brilliant victory, and the Americans would have permanently lost the control of Lake Ontario. As it was, the cowardly militia who ran away as fast as their legs could carry them could boast that they defeated the British. It is some consolation to know that while the conduct of the commander-in-chief was scandalous, that of the troops, officers and men, was admirable. The men of the 100th and 104th Regiments, who had never been under fire before, behaved like veterans. The grenadier company of the 100th, which led the advance, lost twenty-nine men; the four companies engaged of the 104th lost ninety-one men, the two companies of the 8th lost eighty-one and the Glengarry company twenty-six. The British soldiers were not defeated at Sacketts Harbour, they were simply led back from a victorious field by an incompetent general.

CHAPTER XI

BATTLE OF STONEY CREEK

It is now time to return to General Vincent's army which we left encamped at Beaver Dam the night after the capture of Fort George. With the detachments from Fort Erie and Chippawa and the two companies of the 8th Regiment, which had arrived from Twenty Mile Creek, the number of regulars present was one thousand six hundred rank and file. On the following day, the twenty-eighth of May, the retreat was continued to Forty Mile Creek and from there, the same evening, General Vincent wrote his official account of the battle. The militia had been mustered at Beaver Dam and given their choice to remain behind or follow the army. All whose business did not imperatively require their presence at home adopted the latter course. On the twenty-ninth the army encamped at Burlington Heights.

A rumour now reached General Dearborn at Fort George that Procter was marching from Malden with his army to reinforce Vincent. It seemed necessary to the American general that the latter's force should be destroyed or captured before this junction took place. General Winder, a Baltimore lawyer, who, although without military experience had been appointed to high command for political reasons, was anxious to undertake this duty, and was accordingly sent in pursuit of Vincent, with a brigade of infantry, Burns's dragoons and Archer's and Towson's artillery. He advanced as far as Twenty Mile Creek where he was informed of the position of the British army, and halting there he sent back to Dearborn for reinforcements. He was joined on the fifth of June by General Chandler with his brigade, and the latter

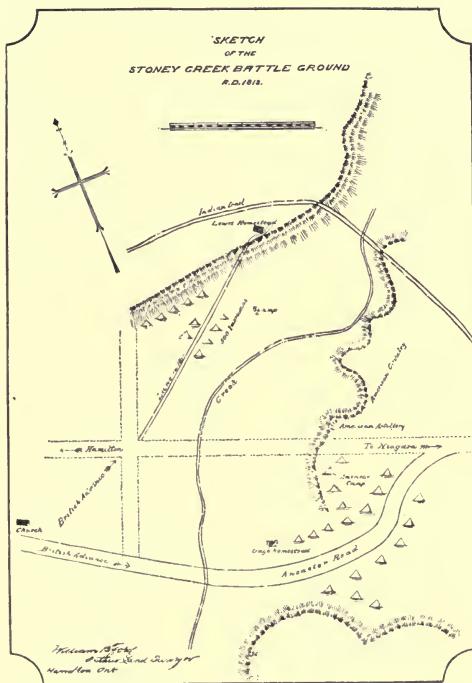
being the senior officer took the chief command. Chandler was another general who had been appointed for political reasons and who had never seen any previous service. The whole force then advanced to Forty Mile Creek from which they drove away a few Niagara dragoons under Captain Merritt. From this point they moved to Stoney Creek where they were within seven miles of Vincent's camp at the head of Burlington Bay.

The American army had been very demonstrative in its advance, and detachments of it had indulged in the comparatively safe amusement of chasing such British pickets as they encountered on their march. Their countrymen who have written histories of the war describe in glowing terms how two pickets, which possibly aggregated as many as twenty men, were driven in one after the other, and how "the victors pushed on in pursuit until they saw Vincent's camp." "Then," we are told, "they wheeled and made their way leisurely back to Stoney Creek." The remarkable character of the battle which followed before the rising of another sun has made patriotic American writers very reticent in regard to the numbers of the American troops encamped at Stoney Creek. Lossing, who had acquired an audacity in falsification not easy to parallel, states their numbers at one thousand three hundred. Now it is admitted that there were two hundred and fifty dragoons, and there were nine guns fully manned by artillery while some of the latter were acting as light infantry. It is, therefore, safe to say that the artillery of the 2nd U. S. Regiment present was at least three hundred and fifty strong. Deducting the cavalry and artillery from Lossing's one thousand three hundred would leave but seven hundred for the strength of the two brigades of infantry. These two brigades comprised seven regiments, which, according to Lossing, could have numbered only one hundred men each. It is not necessary to enlarge on the absurdity of such a statement. The two brigades must have numbered at least three thousand men, in addition to the cavalry and artillery.

When the presence of the enemy at Stoney Creek became known, Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey, the deputy adjutant-general, went out with the light companies of the 8th and 49th Regiments to reconnoitre their position. He reported that their camp guards were few and negligent; their line of encampment long and broken; their artillery feebly supported and several of their corps placed too far in the rear to aid in repelling a blow which might be rapidly and vigorously struck at the front. He, therefore, advised a night attack on the enemy's camp and his advice was adopted. Half an hour before midnight General Vincent moved out of his camp with the force selected for this daring enterprise. It consisted of the 49th Regiment and five companies of the 8th, numbering in all seven hundred and four rank and file. The night was extremely dark, so that the British were able to approach without being discovered, and at two o'clock in the morning with fixed bayonets they rushed into the centre of the American camp. Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey led the advance but General Vincent also engaged in the charge in person. The American centre was instantly broken and Major Plenderleath, at the head of forty men of the 49th, fell upon the artillery and bayoneted the men at the guns. The American left composed of the 5th, 16th and 23rd Regiments of United States infantry was assailed by one-half of the five companies of the 8th under Major Ogilvie, and utterly routed and driven from the field. This flank attack decided the contest. The remainder of the 8th joined in the main assault on the enemy's centre which became completely demoralized and fled. General Winder was captured by Sergeant William Fraser of the 49th, and General Chandler was also taken a few minutes later under one of the guns, where he had fallen in the struggle. Four guns were captured, three iron 6-pounders and a brass 5½-inch howitzer, but as there were not enough horses taken to draw them, two of the 6-pounders were spiked and left behind.

The enemy had been completely defeated and scattered, but daylight was now approaching and it was not deemed

prudent to let the Americans know how small a force had effected their discomfiture. The British therefore marched back to their camp taking with them two brigadier-generals,



THE STONEY CREEK BATTLE-GROUND

It is a little to the east of the present village of Stoney Creek.

one major, five captains, one lieutenant and one hundred and sixteen non-commissioned officers and privates. Besides these living trophies of their valour they had the two cannon

with their carriages and nine artillery horses to draw them. In addition to the prisoners taken the Americans lost seventeen killed and thirty-eight wounded. The British loss amounted to twenty-three killed, one hundred and thirty-six wounded and fifty-five missing. Major Ogilvie and Major Plenderleath, both of whom took a conspicuous part in this brilliant affair, were severely wounded.

The defeat of the Americans at Stoney Creek and the capture of both their generals was one of the most remarkable achievements of the war. Coming as it did after three severe reverses, all due to the neglect and incompetency of the governor-general, it showed that the soldiers of the army were capable of succeeding in any enterprise, however daring, if properly led. It was a blow struck at a truculent and boastful enemy at the moment of his imagined triumph and the shock



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL (AFTERWARDS SIR JOHN) HARVEY

Who suggested and led the night charge at Stoney Creek. He was afterwards governor of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

of it deranged and demoralized the whole American plan of invasion. To Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey, General Vincent in his official report justly gave the credit of suggesting this gallant exploit, and of making the arrangements which resulted in such a signal success. But he was also able to state with entire truth, "that every officer and individual seemed anxious to rival each other in his efforts to support the honour of His Majesty's armies; and to maintain the high character of British troops."

The American troops were so demoralized by the result of the battle of Stoney Creek that they ceased to be an army and became a mere mob. When it was light enough for them to see that the British had departed, they returned to their camp, but only to destroy the larger part of their stores. They then fled to Forty Mile Creek with such haste that they left their dead unburied and their severely wounded uncared for. Fortunately for the British the fears of the enemy prevented the work of destruction from being completed, and when they occupied the deserted American camp at eleven o'clock the same forenoon, they found an abundant supply of stores and ammunition to relieve their wants. At Forty Mile Creek the retreating Americans were joined by Colonel James Miller with four hundred men of the 6th and 15th Regiments of infantry from Fort George. In a letter written to his wife he aptly describes their terrified condition. "I can assure you," said he, "I can scarce believe that you would have been more glad to see me than that army was." The arrival of this reinforcement seems to have put sufficient courage into the retreating force to induce them to halt, and they encamped on a level plateau at Forty Mile Creek with one flank resting on the lake and the other on the creek which skirts the base of the "Mountain." On the following afternoon they were joined by Generals Lewis and Boyd and the former assumed the command. After making due allowance for the losses suffered at Stoney Creek and the reinforcements which had arrived under Colonel Miller, it is safe to say that the American army then encamped

at Forty Mile Creek must have numbered at least three thousand seven hundred men. Unfortunately for them they had lost what alone makes an army efficient, their moral power. They had no longer any confidence in the officers who commanded them or in themselves. Scarcely had they settled themselves comfortably in their new camp when an unexpected and much dreaded enemy appeared. At six o'clock on the evening of the seventh of June the white sails of vessels were seen far out on the lake, and as they approached it was observed by their rigging and flag that they were war vessels, and that they were British. It was the fleet of Sir James Yeo.

This vigilant and active commander had, by the addition of the *Wolfe* to his fleet, acquired what Chauncey deemed so great a superiority that the American commodore fled to Sacketts Harbour and remained there until the twenty-first of July, when his new ship the *Pike* was ready for sea. From this incident the reader will be able to judge of the amount of aid the invading American army would have received from Commodore Chauncey had the *Wolfe* been on the lake at the beginning of navigation, and had the other new ship destroyed at York, which was of equal force with the *Wolfe*, been built at Kingston. On the third of June, Sir James Yeo left that port with three hundred men of the 8th Regiment, and supplies for General Vincent's army. Having discovered the American camp at Forty Mile Creek early on the morning of the eighth, although it was too calm for his heavier vessels to approach, he had two of his schooners, the *Beresford* and *Sidney Smith* towed in to attack the enemy. The long guns of these vessels, which consisted of one 24, two 12's and a 9-pounder were replied to by four American cannon with red-hot shot. Sir James sent in a summons demanding the surrender of the American army, but General Lewis seems to have been of the opinion that such a proceeding was unnecessary so long as his men possessed the ability to run away. At ten o'clock the same morning, this invading army was in full retreat to Fort George. Their baggage and



GRENADIERS OF THE 8TH, KING'S REGIMENT

camp equipage were embarked in nineteen *bateaux* and the men in charge of them attempted to proceed towards the Niagara River, but they were chased by a British schooner and twelve of them captured. The other seven which went ashore and were abandoned by their crews, also became a prize to the British. The American army fled in such haste that when Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp's advance party entered their deserted camp, he found five hundred tents standing, one hundred and forty barrels of flour, one hundred stand of arms, a considerable amount of other stores and seventy prisoners. The American army, in its flight to Fort George, lost heavily by desertions, and many prisoners were taken by the militia and Indians who hovered on its rear. It was estimated by American writers at the time that fully one thousand men were lost in the unfortunate expedition under Winder and Chandler. Its result was to compel General Dearborn to abandon the entire Niagara frontier, except Fort George, and concentrate his forces there, where he remained virtually in a state of siege.

On the same day that the Americans fled from Forty Mile Creek, Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp reached there with the flank company of the 49th Regiment and a battalion company of the 41st. The reinforcement of the 8th, which Sir James Yeo brought him, raised his strength to nearly five hundred men, and with these he held the deserted camp of the Americans until joined by the main body. In the meantime Sir James was very active with his fleet in intercepting and capturing all army supplies going to the Americans at Fort George. On the thirteenth he captured two schooners and a number of boats laden with valuable hospital stores and supplies at Eighteen Mile Creek, east of the Niagara River. On the sixteenth he carried off the contents of a *dépôt* of provisions at the village of Charlotte on the Genesee River, and on the nineteenth he landed a party of marines at Great Sodas and took six hundred barrels of flour.

The 104th Regiment having arrived from Kingston to reinforce General Vincent's army, Lieutenant-Colonel Bis-

shopp, who commanded the advance, pushed forward detachments to hold Beaver Dam and Ten Mile Creek. Half a company of the 104th occupied a stone house owned by one De Cou at the former place, and General Dearborn considered the position of this little force so menacing that he resolved to capture it. Accordingly, on the evening of the twenty-third of June, he detached Lieutenant-Colonel Boerstler of the 14th United States infantry for that purpose with a force which, according to the general's official report, numbered five hundred and seventy men. It comprised the larger part of the 14th Regiment, a company of the 6th and one of the



LAURA SECORD

From a photograph taken late in life.

23rd, with a few cavalry and artillery and two fieldpieces, a 12 and a 6-pounder. Boerstler proceeded by way of Queens-ton and St. Davids, and on the following morning, when near Beaver Dam Creek, encountered a party of two hundred Indians under John Brant and Captain Kerr. After a sharp

skirmish which lasted a couple of hours, Boerstler determined to retire and abandon his attempt on the post at Beaver Dam, but while endeavouring to gain the road leading to Lundy's Lane his path was crossed by Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Clark with fifteen men of the 2nd Lincoln militia, who at once opened fire. Boerstler halted and sent a courier to Dearborn for reinforcements. Lieutenant Fitz Gibbon of the 49th, with forty-six men of that famous regiment, now arrived and added to the embarrassment of the bewildered Americans. Fitz Gibbon had been warned of the intended attack by Mrs. Laura Secord, a resident of Queenston who had overheard some of the American soldiers speaking of it. Mrs. Secord walked from Queenston to Beaver Dam, making a long circuit through the woods to avoid the American guards, and warned Fitz Gibbon of the impending danger. Fitz Gibbon, with an audacity akin to genius, sent in a summons to Boerstler demanding the immediate surrender of his force in the name of Major De Haren of the Canadian Regiment. Boerstler, whose powerful lungs in the affair at Frenchman's Creek the previous autumn were, according to American accounts, so terrifying to the British, now seems to have lost not only the use of his voice, but of his reasoning faculties, for he at once complied with Fitz Gibbon's demand. It was fortunate that as the articles of surrender were being drawn up, Major De Haren did appear with the light company of the 8th Regiment, the two flank companies of the 104th and a few militia cavalry under Captain Hall, the whole numbering about two hundred and twenty rank and file. He was just in time to sign his name to the paper by which five hundred and twelve officers and men of the United States army and thirty militia were surrendered to the forces of His Majesty, King George III. The surrender included the two field-guns already spoken of, two cars and the colours of the 14th U. S. Regiment of infantry. This made the fourth body of American invaders of Canada that was captured by the British.

The history of Boerstler's surrender, following closely on the defeat at Stoney Creek and the flight of the American

army to Fort George, produced great irritation among the valiant men at Washington who made laws for the people of the United States. The recall of General Dearborn was



LAURA SECORD'S MONUMENT IN THE GRAVEYARD AT LUNDY'S LANE

loudly demanded, and that commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States was removed, under the polite form employed by governments, by being requested to retire until his health should be re-established. Dearborn was a political

general and had no qualifications whatever for high command. He took no active part in any of the operations that were conducted in his name, but entrusted the execution of his orders to others. He was succeeded in the command of the army of the north by General James Wilkinson, who was then in command of the gulf region. General Wade Hampton, who had been stationed at Norfolk, was also ordered to the northern frontier. Both men had been active officers in the War of the Revolution, Wilkinson being on the staff of General Gates at Saratoga, and Hampton having been a partisan ranger in South Carolina with Marion. It would have been better for the reputation of both these generals if there had been no War of 1812.

Although the Americans at Fort George must have numbered at least five thousand men, the pressure put upon them by the British was so great that they were restricted to the vicinity of their encampment. The latter had formed a cordon extending from Twelve Mile Creek on Lake Ontario to Queenston on the Niagara River, and within the limited triangular area which this line enclosed the Americans were hemmed. It was at this time that the government, whose secretary of war had boasted that he could take Canada without soldiers, was forced to call in the aid of the Indians of western New York. As early as November, 1812, the Senecas, at the instigation of that debauched and cowardly old vagabond, Red Jacket, had called a bogus council of the Six Nations and issued a declaration of war against Great Britain. It was due to the mere pride and obstinacy of General Smyth, the American "Van Bladder," that they were not at that time found fighting side by side with the soldiers of the United States. But that boastful nation had become humble-minded by reason of its numerous defeats, and in July, 1813, was glad to accept the services of the Senecas and Tuscaroras to fight its battles. This act shows the utter lack of sincerity of those professions of horror at the employment of Indians by the British, which fill so many pages of American histories. When Lord Chatham in December, 1777, made his famous

speech in the House of Lords against the employment of the Indians by his countrymen in the war in America, he could not have been aware that at the very beginning of the revolutionary contest Washington solicited the alliance of all the Indian tribes, and that from the early part of 1775 to the end of the war, the colonists employed as many Indians as they could persuade to join them.

Some minor enterprises on the Niagara frontier at this time now demand notice. On the night of July 4th, 1813, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Clark of the 2nd Lincoln militia with forty of his men crossed over in boats from Chippawa to Schlosser, captured the guard there and brought back to the Canadian side of the Niagara River fifteen prisoners, a brass 6-pounder, fifty stand of arms, and a considerable quantity of ammunition, as well as flour, salt pork and other provisions. They also carried off a gunboat and two *bateaux*.

This daring and successful enterprise suggested another on a more extensive scale. At two o'clock on the morning of the eleventh of July, Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp with a detachment consisting of twenty of the Royal Artillery, forty of the 8th Regiment, one hundred of the 41st, forty of the 49th and about forty of the 2nd and 3rd Lincoln militia under Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Clark, in all two hundred and forty men, embarked at Chippawa for the purpose of attacking the enemy's batteries at Black Rock. They landed there half an hour before daylight, without being perceived, and at once proceeded to attack the batteries which were carried with little opposition, the artillerymen who had been in charge being overpowered, and the militia, two hundred in number, taking to their heels. The blockhouses, barracks and navy yard, with one large schooner, were then burnt and the British proceeded to remove the stores to their boats. This took a considerable time, and before the work was completed the Americans, reinforced by a body of regulars from Buffalo and a band of Indians, had returned in force. The British in the midst of their work were attacked, and a sharp contest ensued, but finding the Indians could not be driven from the woods in

which they had posted themselves without a greater loss being sustained than such a victory would have been worth, it was deemed prudent to retreat to the boats, and the British crossed the river under a very heavy fire. The object of the expedition had been fully accomplished. Eight cannon were captured, of which four were destroyed, and four others, including two brass 6-pounders, brought away; one hundred and seventy-seven muskets, a quantity of ammunition, one hundred and twenty-three barrels of salt, forty-six barrels of whiskey and a quantity of flour, blankets and clothing with seven large *bateaux* and one large scow, were taken to the Canadian side. The British loss was, however, severe and amounted to thirteen killed, twenty-five wounded and six missing. The latter were six privates who were wounded and had to be left behind, along with Captain Saunders of the 41st. The Americans put down their losses at three killed and five wounded, which may be correct, as the greater part of the British loss was sustained after they had embarked.

Among the wounded was Lieutenant-Colonel Bisshopp, the leader of the expedition. He died five days later at Lundy's Lane. Bisshopp was a gallant young man and his loss was a severe one to the army, but in the Black Rock expedition his contempt for the enemy, who were only capable of firing at the British soldiers from ambuscades, seems to have made him careless and induced him to keep his men ashore too long. In this contest the Americans were indebted to their savage allies, the Indians, for any partial success they achieved in inflicting loss upon the British.

The strengthening of Chauncey's fleet on Lake Ontario by the completion of the *Pike*, made the commodore anxious to distinguish himself by some notable enterprise. The British had a dépôt of stores and provisions at Burlington Heights, which was guarded by one hundred and fifty men of the 104th Regiment under Major Maule. It was thought a sudden attack on this post might succeed, and accordingly on the twenty-eighth of July, Chauncey with his fleet of fourteen

vessels set sail from Fort Niagara for the head of Lake Ontario. He had on board three hundred regulars under Colonel Winfield Scott which, with the men who manned his fleet, more than one thousand in number, made a very respectable force. Fortunately Colonel Harvey had been informed of the design of the Americans, and ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Battersby, who commanded a detachment of the Glengarry Regiment at York, to march with his whole force to the relief of Maule. He had not arrived when Chauncey and Scott got to Burlington Bay, but the prospect of his coming was quite sufficient to prevent any attempt being made on the dépôt of provisions. Five hundred Americans who had landed to attack Maule retired again to their vessels without firing a shot. It was thought that glory might be won at a cheaper rate by a raid upon York which was entirely bare of troops, so sail was at once set for that place. On the thirty-first Chauncey's fleet entered York harbour and Colonel Scott landed his troops without opposition, as the militia were still bound by their parole. Scott's party opened the gaol and liberated the prisoners, including three soldiers confined for felony. They then went to the hospitals and paroled the few men there who could not be removed. They next entered the stores of some of the inhabitants and seized their contents, chiefly flour, the same being private property. The next day they again landed and sent three armed boats up the Don in search of public stores, but being disappointed in this, they set fire to the small barracks, wood-yard and storehouse on Gibraltar Point, and sailed away at daylight on the second of August. The only property they obtained in this raid was owned by private parties, the public stores having been removed to a place of safety, and the only prisoners secured were felons and invalids. The principal inhabitants of the town knowing that neither their non-belligerent character nor the protection of a parole would save them from insult, had wisely retired when the enemy appeared. The amount of plunder obtained at York was scarcely greater than the amount of glory won. It was little

to the credit of the Americans that, having fully eight hundred men available for an attack on Major Maule's weak detachment, they should have abandoned their attempt against him without a shot being fired and gone off on a stealing expedition to York.

In singular contrast to the timid conduct of Chauncey and Scott on this occasion, was the bold enterprise of Colonel Murray the same week on Lake Champlain. The Americans held command of this lake when the war commenced, and were thus enabled to transport their men and stores to the very frontier of Canada without any possibility of the British hindering their movements. In the spring of 1813 they had on the lake two armed sloops, the *Growler* and the *Eagle* each mounting eleven guns, and six galleys mounting one gun each. The British had a fortified post at Isle Aux Noix on the Richelieu River, thirteen miles from the boundary line, which was garrisoned by detachments of the 13th and 100th Regiments under the command of Major George Taylor of the latter corps. There were also three gunboats at Isle Aux Noix, which had been built at Quebec and transported overland to the Richelieu. Early on the morning of the third of June, the *Growler* and the *Eagle* were seen in the river near Isle Aux Noix. Major Taylor at once got his three gunboats ready, manned them with Canadians and an artilleryman for each vessel, and sent them against the enemy, while he set out with a small detachment of regulars in boats. The soldiers were landed on both sides of the river, and from its banks they kept up a galling fire on the enemy's vessels while the gunboats pounded them from a distance. After a conflict which lasted about three hours, the *Eagle* was struck by a 24-pound shot which ripped a whole plank off the vessel so that she filled, and her crew ran her ashore. Lieutenant Sydney Smith who commanded the vessels, then surrendered. The American loss was one man killed and nineteen wounded. The British lost three men wounded, yet in the face of the official return of his loss made by Major Taylor, Lossing has the assurance to say, "The loss of the

British was much greater, probably at least one hundred." The fact was that the total number of men engaged on the British side was only one hundred and eight, most of them being of the 100th Regiment. The capture of these vessels was a handsome achievement and highly important, for they carried between them two Columbian 18-pounders, ten long 6-pounders and ten 18-pounder carronades. Their united crews numbered one hundred and twelve men.

The captured sloops, which were re-named the *Chubb* and *Finch*, gave the British the ascendancy on the lake, and rendered possible an important enterprise against the American frontier towns, where large dépôts of provisions had been gathered and barracks built for the use of the army of invasion. On the thirty-first of July, the same day that Scott and Chauncey appeared at York, Colonel J. Murray landed with a British force at Plattsburg. He had with him nine hundred rank and file of the 13th, 100th and 103rd Regiments, which he had embarked at Isle Aux Noix on board the *Chubb* and the *Finch*, the three gunboats and a number of *bateaux*. The militia force at Plattsburg, numbering, according to some accounts, four hundred men, and according to others one thousand five hundred, under General Mooers, ran away the instant the British landed, without firing a shot. Murray at once destroyed the enemy's arsenal and blockhouse, commissary buildings and stores at Plattsburg, and also the extensive barracks at Saranac capable of containing four thousand troops. The soldiers re-embarked next day carrying off with them a large quantity of naval stores and shot, and equipment for *bateaux*. From Plattsburg, Murray went to Swanton on Missisquoi Bay where the barracks and stores and a number of *bateaux* were destroyed. A detachment was also sent to the town of Champlain, where the barracks and blockhouses were burnt. Captain Everard of the *Wasp*, then lying at Quebec, who had volunteered for this service with Captain Pring, had in the meantime crossed the lake with the *Chubb* and *Finch* and a gunboat to Burlington, which is about twenty miles from Plattsburg. There General

Wade Hampton was stationed with an army of four thousand regulars intended for the invasion of Canada, and there also was Commodore Macdonough with three armed sloops, two of them ready for sea. The American commodore had also two gun schooners lying under the protection of a 10-gun battery, and two armed *bateaux*, yet with all this formidable force neither he nor General Hampton made any attempt to interfere with the British in their operations. Captain Everard destroyed four vessels at Burlington and its vicinity, without any attempt on the part of the enemy to prevent it, and then returned to the foot of the lake. This well conducted enterprise resulted in the destruction of an enormous amount of public property, and was effected without the loss of a single life, thanks to the extreme prudence of General Mooers' militia and of General Wade Hampton and his army.

After Chauncey's second raid upon York he deemed himself strong enough to dispute the command of Lake Ontario with Sir James Yeo. As the safety of Canada largely depended on the British fleet being able to traverse the lake with troops and supplies, the struggle for preponderance on this great inland waterway became extremely important. The Americans had many points in their favour in the fact that with their larger population they could obtain the services of a greater number of workmen and sailors, and thus build their ships and man them more readily. They were also nearer their base of supplies than the British, so that Sir James Yeo had heavy odds to contend against and is entitled to a great deal of credit for being able to maintain himself on the lake at all. There never was a time when Chauncey offered him battle that the American commander was not greatly superior in numbers, and therefore Sir James, as a rule, wisely refused to risk everything in a decisive engagement. It would have been the height of folly to do so where so much was at stake, and where some trifling accident might have involved the loss of all.

When Chauncey appeared on Lake Ontario at the beginning

of August he had fourteen vessels, two ships, the *Pike* and the *Madison*, the *Oneida*, a brig, and eleven schooners. This fleet measured two thousand five hundred and seventy-six tons, carried one hundred and twelve guns, was manned by nine hundred and eighty men and threw one thousand three hundred and ninety-nine pounds of metal at a broadside. Sir James Yeo had six vessels; two ships, the *Wolfe* and the *Royal George*, the *Melville* and the *Moir*, brigs, and two schooners. Their aggregate tonnage was two thousand and ninety-one tons, their guns numbered ninety-two, their crews seven hundred and seventy, and their broadside weight of metal one thousand three hundred and seventy-four pounds. These figures on their face would show the American fleet to be one-fourth superior to the British in tonnage and number of men, and but slightly superior in weight of metal. But the figures only show part of the truth. To quote an American writer, Mr. Roosevelt: "The Americans greatly excelled in the number and character of their long guns." They threw at a broadside eight hundred and six pounds of long gun metal and five hundred and eighty four pounds of carronade metal, while the British only threw from their long guns one hundred and eighty pounds and from their carronades one thousand one hundred and ninety-four pounds. If Mr. Roosevelt's suggestion that a long 12-pounder is equal to a 32-pounder carronade be correct, then the American fleet was superior in broadside weight of metal as five is to three, or doubly superior if tonnage and number of men are taken into account. This superiority, however, was more marked in calm weather than in rough, for the schooners, each of which carried a very heavy gun, were not so effective in a seaway as when the water was smooth.

The two fleets first caught sight of each other on the seventh of August, off the Niagara River, and their commanders went through a series of manœuvres so as to engage with advantage. Early on the morning of the eighth a heavy squall struck both fleets and two of the American schooners capsized and foundered, both the crews being drowned except

sixteen men who were picked up by the boats of the British fleet. It is quite like the unreliable Lossing to say of this accident: "This was a severe blow to the lake service, for these two vessels, carrying nineteen guns between them were of the best of it." This is the same as saying that the *Hamilton* and the *Scourge*, each with crews of fifty men and throwing eighty pounds of metal at a broadside, were more powerful than the *Pike* with a crew of three hundred men and a broadside of three hundred and sixty pounds, or the *Madison* with two hundred men and a broadside of three hundred and sixty-four pounds.

After much manœuvring the two fleets came to an engagement on the evening of the tenth, the wind being from the south-west. Chauncey formed his fleet in two lines on the port tack with his larger vessels to leeward. Yeo approached from behind to windward in single column on the same tack. At eleven o'clock the weather line opened fire at a very long range, and a quarter of an hour later the action became general. In a few minutes the weather line broke up and passed to leeward, except the schooners *Julia* and *Growler* which tacked. Yeo cut off these vessels and captured them, while Chauncey with the rest of his fleet made all sail for Niagara. The *Julia* and the *Growler* were each about eighty tons, carried eighty men between them, and had each a long 32 and a long 12-pounder mounted on swivels.

On the eleventh of September there was another partial engagement between the rival fleets at very long range, which was prevented from being decisive by the fact that Chauncey avoided close action. On the twenty-eighth the two squadrons again met off York, and a sharp combat ensued in which the *Wolfe*, Sir James Yeo's flagship, lost her main-topmast and mainyard, and became too much disabled to manœuvre, so she had to be put before the wind. Her retreat was ably protected by Captain Mulcaster in the *Royal George*. The British fleet ran into Burlington Bay where Chauncey did not venture to follow it. The American commodore, however, had some compensation

for his failure to destroy the British fleet by his capture a few days later of five small vessels having on board two hundred and fifty men of De Watteville's Regiment, on their way from York to Kingston.

About the beginning of July, Major-General De Rottenburg succeeded General Sheaffe as president of the Upper Province, and as such took the command of the troops from General Vincent. During the latter part of the same month he had pressed the enemy back, so that he had his headquarters at the village of St. Davids, which is about eight miles from Fort George. His advance posts occupied a position not more than four miles from the American camp, but no movement of any importance took place in either army, unless the fruitless demonstration made by Sir George Prevost on the twenty-fourth of August is entitled to that designation. The commander-in-chief had arrived from Kingston a few days previously, and the ostensible object of the demonstration was to ascertain the extent of the enemy's works and the means they possessed of defending their position. The British drove in the enemy's pickets, and even gained possession of the town of Newark, but as General Boyd, who commanded at Fort George, declined to permit his troops to leave their intrenchments, nothing resulted from this advance, and the British forces were withdrawn to their works. One cause of the inactivity which prevailed on the Niagara frontier during the summer and autumn of 1813, was the great amount of sickness which existed in both camps owing to fever and ague, by which about one-third of the men were prostrated. This malady not only hindered active operations about Fort George, but also seriously delayed another important enterprise which General Wilkinson had planned, involving nothing less than the capture of Montreal.

CHAPTER XII

PROCTER'S DEFEAT ON THE THAMES

IT is now time to turn to the operations of the right division of the army of Upper Canada under Major-General Procter. After the failure to capture Fort Meigs there was a considerable period during which the army remained inactive at Sandwich awaiting reinforcements. There Procter was joined by a part of the remaining effective strength of the 41st Regiment, and, as he had a large body of Indians with him, it was determined to begin active operations against the American north-western army. The necessity for this step was one of the penalties which the Indian alliance imposed on the British. It is obvious that, considering the very limited force that could be spared for the occupation of the Detroit frontier, and the enormous difficulties involved in the transportation of supplies to the army there, a defensive campaign was the one best suited to the circumstances of the case. But the Indians were not satisfied to conduct a merely defensive war, and in order to retain their friendship it became necessary for Procter to agree to attack the enemy in his own territory. There was a double disadvantage in this, for not only had such an attack to be made on ground which the enemy had selected for defensive purposes and fortified, but it had to be undertaken without the aid of the Indians themselves, who were utterly useless when a fort had to be assaulted. To the truth of this statement the numerous Indian wars that have been waged on this continent bear ample testimony.

The North-West Indians particularly desired the reduction of Fort Meigs, and of Fort Stephenson on the Sandusky

River. This fort had been erected in the summer of 1812, and consisted of a square picketed enclosure three hundred feet long and one hundred and eighty wide. At three of the angles there were blockhouses, on one of which a 6-pounder was mounted. The pickets around the fort were from fourteen to sixteen feet in height, and outside of them was a dry ditch twelve feet wide and eight feet deep. As a further protection from assault each picket was armed at the top with a bayonet. Fort Stephenson was garrisoned by one hundred and sixty regulars under Major Croghan. General Harrison, who commanded the American north-western army, had his headquarters at Seneca, nine miles from Fort Stephenson, where he had one thousand two hundred regulars and a large force of militia under McArthur and Cass. Fort Meigs had a garrison of about two thousand men.

General Procter landed at the mouth of the Sandusky River on the first of August, with a detachment of the 41st Regiment numbering three hundred and sixty-eight officers and men, and twenty-three artillerymen. He had also two hundred Indians with him, the others under Tecumseh having gone off towards Fort Meigs. As Harrison's large army was but nine miles distant, this attack on Fort Stephenson with so small a force certainly showed a great deal of boldness, but its wisdom may well be doubted. On the morning of the second the British opened fire on the fort, at a distance of about two hundred yards, with two light 6-pounders and two 5½-inch howitzers. The guns were too light to produce any marked effect on the blockhouses, so during the same afternoon Procter ordered the works to be stormed. At five o'clock, Lieutenant-Colonel Short advanced directly against the north-west angle of the works with one hundred and eighty men of the 41st Regiment, while one hundred and sixty rank and file of the same regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel Warburton made a circuit through the woods to attack the fort from the south side. Short's storming party approached under a severe fire from the musketry of the garrison, but, nothing daunted, bravely pushed forward over

the glacis and leaped into the ditch to cut away the pickets. At this instant the 6-pounder, which had been placed in the blockhouse on the north side of the fort so that its fire would sweep the ditch, was discharged with dreadful effect. It was loaded with slugs and when fired was only a few yards distant from the head of the column. Lieutenant-Colonel Short and Lieutenant Gordon were instantly killed, and with them more than twenty privates, while a still greater number were wounded. The brave survivors rallied and again advanced, but it was found that the ditch was so completely commanded, both by the cannon and the musketry of the enemy, that success was impossible. The assaulting column retired with as many of their wounded as they were able to remove. The column under Lieutenant-Colonel Warburton did not reach the south side of the fort until the first attack had failed, and, therefore, there was nothing for it but a retreat.

In this affair the British loss amounted to twenty-six killed, twenty-nine wounded and missing, and forty-one wounded and brought away, a total of ninety-six. The American loss, according to their own accounts, was but one killed and seven wounded. Among the British officers wounded were Captains Muir and Dixon and Lieutenant McIntyre. The Indians with Procter took no part in this attack, and, therefore, suffered no loss, although it was in deference to their wishes that the expedition had been undertaken. The attempt on Fort Stephenson was abandoned and General Procter and his soldiers returned to Sandwich. The Americans were able to treat this repulse of the British as an unparalleled exploit and to exalt Croghan almost to the level of Hannibal. But this extravagance of praise brought in this, as in other cases, its own punishment, for it led to Croghan being afterwards entrusted with a separate command in which he proved himself grossly incompetent, and very far from being either a hero or a military genius.

The result of the operations in the North-West had shown that nothing effective could be accomplished by the

Americans unless the command of Lake Erie could be obtained. The British had the armed ship *Queen Charlotte*, the brig *Hunter* and one or two smaller vessels on this lake when the war broke out, and they should have had no difficulty in maintaining the ascendancy there, had proper measures been adopted. But, while the Americans were bending all their energies to the equipment of a fleet powerful enough to drive the British from the lake, there was no corresponding activity on the British side. In February, 1813, Captain Oliver Hazard Perry, of the United States navy, was appointed to the command of the American fleets on Lake Erie and the Upper Lakes, to act under Commodore Chauncey. The nucleus of a fleet already existed in the brig *Caledonia*, which, as we have seen, was captured in the autumn of 1812, and in the schooners *Somers*, *Tigress* and *Ohio*, and the sloop *Trippe*, purchased from private parties. These vessels could not get out of the Niagara River while the British held that frontier, but the brief period during which the Americans possessed it, after the capture of Fort George, enabled them to be tracked up to the lake and taken to Presqu'île, and Erie. There three other schooners, the *Ariel*, *Scorpion* and *Porcupine* had been built, and two 20-gun brigs were under construction. On the tenth of July all these vessels were ready for sea, but they were unable to get out of the harbour of Erie because of the British fleet. There were only seven feet of water on the bar at the entrance to this harbour, so the heavy brigs could not go out with their armament on board, and consequently a comparatively small British force was able to keep them imprisoned and paralyze their strength.

The British commander on Lake Erie was Captain Robert Heriot Barclay of the Royal Navy, who with nineteen seamen had been sent up from Halifax in the spring of 1813. Barclay was a brave officer who had lost an arm under Nelson at Trafalgar, but, unfortunately for Canada, he does not seem to have learned from his heroic chief the great lesson that strict attention to duty is quite as essential to

an officer as courage. Nelson, when at the very height of his fame, when his name was honoured and feared throughout the civilized world, did not deem it beneath him to engage in the routine work of a blockade, and watched the port of Toulon so closely that for one year and ten months he never put a foot ashore. Captain Barclay showed no such constancy in blockading Erie, but varied the monotony of this work by visits to Amherstburg and other places on the coast. The Americans noticed Barclay's lack of perseverance in the discharge of his duties and resolved to take advantage of it. At Amherstburg there was a pretty widow of an officer of some rank who was very anxious to get to York. Captain Barclay offered her a passage down the lake in his ship, conveyed her to Port Dover, and then escorted her to the residence of Dr. Rolph. Barclay was invited to a dinner there the following day and waited over to attend it. When he got back to Erie, after an absence of more than three days from his post, the American brigs were over the bar and the control of the lake had passed from his hands. During his absence the vessels had been brought out of port by means of a "camel," improvised out of two large scows. Once on the lake with their armament on board they were too powerful to be successfully opposed, and Barclay had to retire to Amherstburg.

At Amherstburg the British had built a small ship for Barclay's fleet, but owing to the neglect of Sir George Prevost the guns intended for her had not arrived from Lake Ontario, and, of course, with the Americans in command of the lake, could not now be conveyed to Amherstburg. The Indians had flocked to that place in such numbers that the supplies intended for the British army rapidly disappeared, and starvation stared both army and navy in the face. Nothing remained but to arm the new ship with the guns of the fort, a make-shift only to be justified by the necessities of the case. The result of this was that the new vessel, which was named the *Detroit*, had six different classes of guns on board when she went into action, and these

guns were of four different calibres. She carried two long 24's and one short 24, a long and a short 18, six long 12's and eight long 9's. So deficient was her equipment that her guns had to be fired by flashing pistols at their touch-holes. Yet it was necessary that the British fleet, of which this miserably provided vessel was the flagship, should go out to meet a very superior and thoroughly equipped enemy.

Sir George Prevost had been no more diligent in providing Barclay with crews than in supplying him with guns for his vessels. When he arrived at Amherstburg he had nineteen sailors with him, and three days before the battle with Perry's fleet he was joined by thirty-six more sailors which had come up from H. M. S. *Dover*. There were one hundred and two Canadian sailors in the fleet, and, to complete the number necessary to man the guns, two hundred and fifty officers and men of the 41st Regiment were taken on board. The total number on board Barclay's vessels and available for duty was therefore four hundred and seven, supposing none to be on the sick list, but as many were sick the effective force was much reduced. There were five hundred and thirty-two men on board Perry's fleet, including a considerable proportion of sick. Of the total, three hundred and twenty-nine were seamen, one hundred and fifty-eight marines or soldiers and forty-five volunteers. If the latter were all sea-faring men, as is probable, Perry had about two and one-half times as many sailors in his fleet as Barclay. The strength of the two fleets in guns is shown by the following table:—

| AMERICAN FLEET | | BRITISH FLEET | |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Weight of Broadside. | | Weight of Broadside. |
| <i>Lawrence</i> | 300 lbs. | <i>Detroit</i> | 138 lbs. |
| <i>Niagara</i> | 300 " | <i>Queen Charlotte</i> | 189 " |
| <i>Caledonia</i> | 80 " | <i>Lady Prevost</i> | 75 " |
| <i>Ariel</i> | 48 " | <i>Hunter</i> | 30 " |
| <i>Scorpion</i> | 64 " | <i>Chippewa</i> | 9 " |
| <i>Somers</i> | 56 " | <i>Little Belt</i> | 18 " |
| <i>Porcupine</i> | 32 " | | |
| <i>Tigress</i> | 32 " | | |
| <i>Trippe</i> | 24 " | | |
| | <hr/> 936 lbs. | | <hr/> 459 lbs. |

In weight of metal the American squadron was therefore more than double the force of the British. During the engagement, however, both the *Laurence* and *Niagara* substituted a long 12-pounder for a short 32 on the engaged side, so that the broadside of each was reduced in weight from three hundred pounds to two hundred and eighty pounds, and the total broadside of the fleet to eight hundred and seventy-six pounds. Of the American broadside, two hundred and eighty-eight pounds were from long guns and six hundred and eight pounds from carronades. Of the British broadside, one hundred and ninety-five pounds were from long guns and two hundred and sixty-four pounds from carronades. On this Mr. Roosevelt, almost the only American author who has attempted to give an honest account of this battle, very candidly says:—"The superiority of the Americans in long gun metal was therefore nearly as three is to two, and in carronade metal greater than two is to one. The chief fault to be found in the various American accounts is that they sedulously conceal the comparative weight of metal, while carefully specifying the number of guns. Thus Lossing says:—'Barclay had thirty-five long guns to Perry's fifteen, and possessed greatly the advantage in action at a distance;' which he certainly did not." We can see from this that some of the American accounts of this battle are unreliable, especially that of Lossing. Although Perry had but fifteen long guns, they were so mounted that all could be used in the battle, while Barclay could only employ nineteen of his thirty-five. And to show how false Lossing's statement above quoted is, it is only necessary to explain that Perry's fifteen long guns consisted of three 32-pounders, four 24-pounders, and eight 12-pounders, while Barclay's nineteen were one 24, one 18, five 12's, seven 9's, four 6's, one 4 and one 2-pounder. The short guns or carronades used by Perry in the battle were nineteen 32-pounders; those used by Barclay were eight 24-pounders and six 12-pounders.

It was on the morning of the eighteenth of September

that the two fleets sighted each other. Perry had learned from his agents in Detroit of the extreme weakness of the British fleet and the stern necessity which had forced Barclay to risk an engagement with his inferior force. Yet, with the assurance of victory which his twofold superiority gave him, Perry thought it necessary to increase the importance of his anticipated triumph by resorting to demonstrations of a theatrical character. He had a large flag prepared for his ship with the alleged dying words of Captain Lawrence, "Don't give up the ship," printed upon it, and in imitation of Nelson he called together the officers of his squadron to give them instructions with regard to the expected action. As the officers were leaving, he said: "Gentlemen, remember your instructions. Nelson has expressed my idea in the words, 'If you lay your enemy close alongside you cannot be out of place,' good-night." Nelson expressing Perry's idea is something calculated to arouse the mirth of nations.

The British fleet when sighted was off Put-in-Bay where Perry's vessels lay. The latter were soon under weigh and at ten o'clock the American squadron was approaching Barclay. The British commander had his ships arranged lying to in a close column heading to the south-west in the following order: *Chippewa*, *Detroit*, *Hunter*, *Queen Charlotte*, *Lady Prevost* and *Little Belt*. The wind, which in the morning had been from the south-west, now shifted to the north-east, giving the Americans the weather guage, the breeze being very light. Perry came down with the wind on his port beam, and made the attack in column in the following order: *Ariel*, *Scorpion*, *Lawrence*, *Caledonia*, *Niagara*, *Somers*, *Porcupine*, *Tigress* and *Tripp*. Perry's plan of attack embraced three separate combats and to show their nature and the chance the British had of winning a victory, it is necessary to specify them in detail. The *Scorpion*, *Ariel*, *Lawrence*, (Perry's flagship) and *Caledonia* were to attack the *Chippewa*, *Detroit*, (Barclay's flagship) and *Hunter*. The *Niagara* was to attack the *Queen Charlotte*,

and the *Somers*, *Porcupine*, *Tigress* and *Trippe* were to attack the *Lady Prevost* and *Little Belt*. The force engaged in these combats was as follows:—

VAN COMBAT

| AMERICAN | | BRITISH | |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Guns fought. | Broadside. | Guns fought. | Broadside. |
| <i>Scorpion</i> , 1 long 32 } | 64 lbs. | <i>Chippewa</i> , 1 long 9, | 9 lbs. |
| “ 1 short 32 } | | | |
| <i>Ariel</i> , 4 long 12's, | 48 lbs. | <i>Detroit</i> , 1 long 18 | 138 lbs. |
| | | “ 1 “ 24 | |
| | | “ 3 “ 12's | |
| | | “ 4 “ 9's | |
| | | “ 1 short 24 | 30 lbs. |
| <i>Lawrence</i> , 2 long 12's } | 280 lbs. | <i>Hunter</i> , 2 long 6's | |
| “ 8 short 32's } | | “ 1 “ 4 | |
| <i>Caledonia</i> , 2 long 24's } | 80 lbs. | “ 1 “ 2 | |
| 1 short 32 } | | “ 1 short 12 | |
| 19 guns. | 472 lbs. | 16 guns. | 177 lbs. |

CENTRE COMBAT

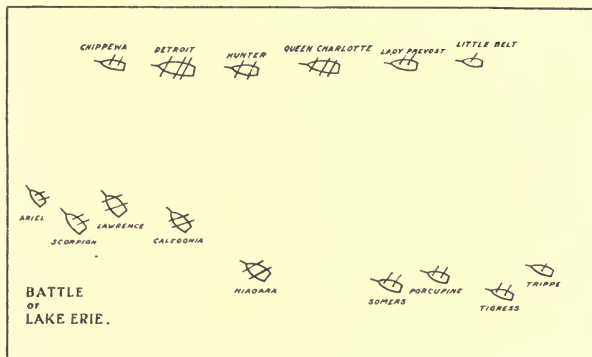
| AMERICAN | | BRITISH | |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Guns fought. | Broadside. | Guns fought. | Broadside. |
| <i>Niagara</i> , 2 long 12's } | 280 lbs. | <i>Queen Charlotte</i> , | 189 lbs. |
| “ 8 short 32's } | | “ 1 long 12 | |
| | | “ 1 long 9 | |
| 10 guns. | | “ 7 short 24's | |
| | | 9 guns. | |

REAR COMBAT

| AMERICAN | | BRITISH | |
|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Guns fought. | Broadside. | Guns fought. | Broadside. |
| <i>Somers</i> , 1 long 24 } | 56 lbs. | <i>Lady Prevost</i> , | 75 lbs. |
| “ 1 short 32 } | | “ 1 long 9 | |
| | | “ 1 long 6 | |
| <i>Porcupine</i> , 1 long 32, | 32 lbs. | “ 5 short 12's | |
| <i>Tigress</i> , 1 long 32, | 32 lbs. | <i>Little Belt</i> , 1 long 12 | 18 lbs. |
| <i>Trippe</i> , 1 long 24, | 24 lbs. | “ 1 long 6 | |
| 5 guns. | 144 lbs. | 9 guns. | 93 lbs. |

With these figures in view it is unnecessary to explain to the reader the nearly threefold superiority of the Ameri-

cans in the van combat, and the great preponderance of force they possessed in the other two. At 11.45 the *Detroit* commenced the action by a shot from her long 24 which fell short; at 11.50 she fired a second which went crashing through the *Lawrence* and was replied to by the *Scorpion's* long 32. At 11.55 the *Lawrence* opened with both her long 12's and gradually drew nearer to the *Detroit* so that her heavy carronades might take effect. A great deal is said in Ameri-



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE, SEPTEMBER 18TH, 1813

can accounts of the battle of the heavy loss sustained by the *Lawrence*, while approaching the *Detroit*, from the long guns of the *Chippewa*, *Detroit* and *Hunter* which threw one hundred and forty-one pounds at a broadside; but the *Detroit* suffered quite as much at the same time from the long guns of the *Scorpion*, *Ariel*, *Lawrence* and *Caledonia* which threw one hundred and fifty-two pounds of metal at a broadside. When the *Scorpion*, *Lawrence* and *Caledonia* got within carronade range the three hundred and twenty pounds of metal which they threw from short guns was just ninefold superior to the thirty-six pounds thrown from similar guns by the *Detroit* and *Hunter*.

At 12.30 the American four and British three ships of the van were furiously engaged, but the *Niagara* kept at such a respectful distance from her chosen antagonist, the *Queen Charlotte*, that the carronades of neither vessels could be used with effect. The latter, however, suffered greatly from the long guns of the American schooners and lost her commander, Captain Finnis and her first lieutenant, Mr. Stokoe, who were both killed early in the action. Her next in command, Provincial Lieutenant Irvine, seeing that the *Niagara* avoided close action, passed the *Hunter* and took a station between that vessel and the *Detroit*. This made the contest with the *Lawrence* and her three assailants more equal than it had been, and made the van combat a fight between four British vessels throwing two hundred and four pounds of metal from carronades and one hundred and sixty-two pounds from long guns, and four American vessels throwing three hundred and twenty pounds from carronades and one hundred and fifty-two pounds from long guns. The superiority of the Americans in this combat in weight of metal was therefore about thirty per cent., without taking into account the two long 12's of the *Niagara*, which were directed against the *Detroit* and her consorts. If the Americans had won this combat, even with such odds in their favour, there might have been some shadow of excuse for the claims which they based on their victory, but, as they lost it, these claims must be pronounced false.

The centre combat, as has been seen, failed by reason of the timidity of the captain of the *Niagara*, Jesse D. Elliott, the same person who was so much bepraised, and who received a vote of thanks from Congress and a sword for his gallantry in cutting out two British vessels at Fort Erie, in October, 1812. But the rear combat went on vigorously between the *Somers*, *Porcupine*, *Tigress* and *Trippe* with their five heavy guns, and the *Lady Prevost* and *Little Belt* with their nine light ones. The four American vessels kept at such a distance that the 12-pounder carronade of the *Lady Prevost* was almost useless, yet, to quote Mr. Roosevelt, she made

"a very noble fight." It was obvious that in a contest at long range between three long 32's and two long 24's throwing one hundred and forty-four pounds of metal on the American side, and one long 12, one long 9 and two long 6's throwing thirty-three pounds on the British side, the weaker party must suffer. The *Lady Prevost* was greatly cut up, her commander Lieutenant Buchan being dangerously, and her acting first lieutenant severely wounded, and she began falling gradually to leeward.

In the meantime the van combat was being carried on with great determination on both sides. The Americans fought bravely, but not so skilfully as the British. The *Detroit* on the one side and the *Lawrence* on the other were the centres of attack. The *Detroit* was frightfully shattered and had lost her first lieutenant, Mr. Garland, while Captain Barclay was so badly hurt that he was obliged to quit the deck, leaving the vessel in charge of Lieutenant George Inglis. But the *Lawrence* was in a still worse plight, her losses in killed and wounded had been frightful, one after another all the guns on her engaged side had been dismounted, and she was reduced to the condition of a hulk. At two o'clock Perry hauled down his "Don't give up the ship" flag, and started in a row boat for the *Niagara*, which, owing to the extreme prudence of her commander, had up to that time suffered hardly any loss. As soon as Perry left the *Lawrence*, Lieutenant Yarnall struck her flag, but as all the boats of the *Detroit* had been shot away she could not for the moment be taken possession of by the British.

When Perry boarded the *Niagara* she was coming up towards the head of the line with a fresh breeze. She was a new element brought into the contest. The American commander sent back Elliott to order up the schooners which were in the rear, and then stood towards the British van. The *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* had their rigging too much disabled to tack, and, in attempting to wear, they fell foul of each other. The *Niagara*, which had previously delivered her broadside into the *Chippewa*, *Little Belt* and

Lady Prevost to port, and the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte* and *Hunter* to starboard, now luffed athwart the bows of the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*, and kept up a terrific discharge of cannon and musketry at half pistol range. They were at the same time raked by the *Caledonia* and the American schooners. As both vessels were totally disabled there was nothing left for them but to strike their colours. The *Hunter* and *Lady Prevost* did the same. The *Chippewa* and *Little Belt* tried to escape but were captured by the *Trippe* and *Scorpion* after a chase which lasted several hours. Thus the whole British fleet on Lake Erie was taken.

The British lost in this battle forty-one killed, including Captains S. J. Garden and R. A. Finnis, and ninety-four wounded, including Captain Barclay and Lieutenants Stokoe, Garland, Buchan, Rolette and Bignall, in all one hundred and thirty-five. The Americans had twenty-seven killed and ninety-six wounded, of whom three died, a total of one hundred and twenty-three. The fault of Barclay in raising the blockade of Erie long enough to allow the Americans to get out of port was an enormous one, almost a crime, but in the action he proved himself a brave and skilful commander. No Briton or Canadian need feel ashamed of the battle of Lake Erie. The Americans won it, indeed, but the honours rested with the defeated party. Roosevelt, although writing as an American, says: "Were it not for the fact that the victory was so complete it might be said that the length of the contest and the trifling disparity of loss reflected rather the most credit on the British." In another place he says: "The simple truth is that where on both sides the officers and men were equally brave and skilful, the side which possessed the superiority of force, in the proportion of three to two, could not help winning." It has been already shown that the proportion of force in favour of the Americans, instead of being three to two was really two to one. The *Chippewa* with her single long 9 and the *Little Belt* with her long 12 and long 6 in broadside were not worthy to be called vessels of war, and were wholly

unfit to be placed in line of battle. Nor was the *Hunter* which had no long gun heavier than a 6, and which carried such pop-guns as 4's and 2's, much better off. The only vessels which Barclay had that were fit for combat, were the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*, and the former, as we have seen, went into battle armed with make-shift guns, taken from a fortification, of four different calibres and six different classes. Had she been provided with the armament intended for her, which did not arrive at Burlington Heights from Kingston until after she was captured, she would have carried ten short 24's and two long 12's and her broadside, instead of being one hundred and thirty-eight pounds, would have been two hundred and fifty-two pounds, or almost double. Had she been so armed, the result of the contest would have been very different; the *Lawrence* would have been compelled to strike an hour earlier than she did, and the *Niagara* would have been beaten off or captured.

It is admitted that but for the *Niagara*, the American fleet would have been utterly defeated, and the proof of it lies in the fact that the *Lawrence* had struck her flag. As Roosevelt says: "Perry made a headlong attack; his superior force, whether through his fault or misfortune can hardly be said, being brought into action in such a manner that the head of the line was crushed by the inferior force opposed. Being literally hammered out of his own ship, Perry brought up its powerful twin sister, and the already shattered hostile squadron was crushed by sheer weight." That the British vessels were not utterly helpless when the *Niagara* attacked them is shown by the loss suffered by that ship in the last few minutes of the battle, which amounted to two killed and twenty-five wounded. Indeed, but for the accidental fouling of the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*, due to their unrigged condition, which rendered them perfectly helpless against the *Niagara's* broadsides delivered from a raking position, it is doubtful whether either vessel would have been under the necessity of striking despite the enormous losses both had suffered.

With the *Niagara* out of the fight, then the victory would have been Barclay's, and without this vessel the American fleet would still have been superior to the British by one-third, as may be seen by the following comparative statement:

| | BROADSIDE WEIGHT OF METAL. | | |
|---|----------------------------|------------------|----------|
| | From long guns. | From carronades. | Total. |
| Perry's fleet without <i>Niagara</i> | 264 lbs. | 352 lbs. | 616 lbs. |
| Barclay's fleet..... | 195 " | 264 " | 459 " |
| Difference in favour of Perry's.. | 69 lbs. | 88 lbs. | 157 lbs. |

Here we have a difference in favour of the Americans of 35 per cent. in long gun metal, and yet with this superiority the Americans were beaten until the staunch and uninjured *Niagara* was brought into action. No account is here taken of the damage done by the *Niagara* during her two hours and a half cannonade of the British ships with her two long 12's, in the first part of the battle. In view of such facts and figures as these, how absurd seems all the boasting of the Americans over Perry's victory.

The result of Perry's victory was to leave the whole coast of the western peninsula exposed to invasion, and to cut off Procter's army from its base of supplies. General Harrison was gathering troops for another attack on Detroit and Malden and it became evident that these places could not be held against the overwhelming forces of the enemy. The whole strength of the British right division under Procter was only eight hundred and seventy-seven men of all ranks, sick and well, or seven hundred and sixty rank and file, on the day after the battle of Lake Erie. Of the two hundred and fifty officers and men of his army on board the fleet, twenty-three had been killed, forty-nine wounded and the remainder taken prisoners.

On the twenty-fourth of September, General Harrison's army gathered at Put-in-Bay, and on the twenty-seventh, they embarked to the number of five thousand men on board the vessels of Perry's fleet, and landed the same day

three or four miles below Amherstburg. General Procter had previously abandoned this place and retired to Sandwich, first destroying Fort Malden, which had been deprived of its guns to arm the *Detroit*. Harrison occupied Amherstburg the same evening, and on the following day advanced towards Sandwich which he entered on the afternoon of the twenty-ninth. At the same time the American vessels reached Detroit. On the thirtieth, Colonel Johnson with his regiment of mounted infantry arrived there, raising the number of Harrison's army to six thousand men. Procter had retreated with his little force to the Thames, and made a temporary stand at Dalsen's farm, about fifteen miles from the mouth of the river and fifty-six miles from Detroit by water. Besides his white troops, Procter had with him about one thousand two hundred Indians under Tecumseh.

On the second of October, Harrison started in pursuit of Procter. According to his own official letter he had with him "about one hundred and forty of the regular troops, Johnson's mounted regiment and such of Governor Selby's volunteers as were fit for a rapid march, the whole amounting to about three thousand five hundred men." He also had with him, although he does not mention the fact in his letter, about two hundred and sixty Wyandot, Shawanese and Seneca Indians under Chiefs Lewis, Black Hoof and Black Snake. Harrison's baggage, provisions and ammunition were carried up the Thames by water in three of Perry's gunboats. On the third some of Harrison's men captured a lieutenant and eleven rank and file of a troop of provincial dragoons belonging to Procter's army, who had just commenced the destruction of a bridge over a small tributary of the Thames. The same evening Harrison's army encamped about four miles below Dalsen's. On the fourth the pursuit was continued. At Chatham a skirmish took place with some Indians who had partially destroyed a bridge near the creek, in which the latter lost thirteen killed, and the Americans eight or nine killed and wounded. The Indians were driven away, the bridge repaired and the Americans crossed. Here Walk-in-the-Water,

the Wyandot chief who had deserted Procter, met Harrison with sixty warriors and offered to join the Americans. He was sent back to Detroit. Just above Chatham one of Procter's boats laden with arms and stores was found on fire, and four miles farther up, at Bowles's Farm, two other boats partially consumed and similarly laden were also found. Here two 24-pounders were taken.

On the morning of the fifth, Harrison's army captured two British gunboats with several *bateaux* laden with army supplies and ammunition. These vessels had on board one hundred and forty-four officers and men of the 41st Regiment, and thirty men of the Newfoundland Regiment and 10th Royal Veteran Battalion. This last misfortune, by depriving Procter of his ammunition and supplies, rendered it necessary for him to make a stand and risk an engagement with a vastly superior enemy. He took up a position on the right bank of the Thames which protected his left. His whole effective force of white troops had been reduced to four hundred and seventy-six of all ranks, of which four hundred and eight were of the 41st Regiment. There were thirty-eight Provincial Dragoons, and thirty men of the Royal Artillery with six guns, 3 and 6-pounders. With this small body of white troops there were five hundred Indians, all the others having deserted in the course of the retreat.

General Procter arranged his little army for battle with a good deal of skill. The men of the 41st Regiment were drawn up in open files in a beech forest without any undergrowth. Their right rested on a small swamp which ran parallel with the river. Further to the right was a larger swamp and in front of it a forest of a thicker growth. Along the margin of this the Indians were posted, their line forming an obtuse angle with the British drawn up in front. Behind the 41st Regiment were the 38th Provincial Dragoons. A 6-pounder enfiladed the only road by which the Americans could advance. The five other guns which Procter had with him had been stationed on an eminence near Moravian Town, two miles from the field of battle, in order to guard a ford there.

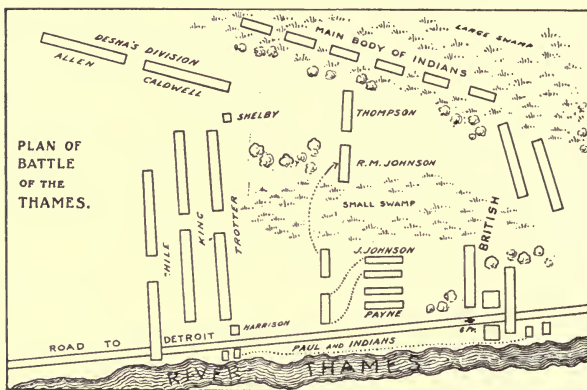
They would have been much better placed if used to protect the British front in the battle.

Harrison's attacking force consisted of "something above three thousand men" according to his own official report. No doubt the number was greater than he states, for he enumerates five brigades of Kentucky volunteers, one hundred and twenty regulars of the 27th U. S. Regiment, and Colonel Johnson's mounted infantry regiment, which was about one thousand strong. The matter is not of much consequence for, according to his own showing, Harrison had more than three times as many troops as the British and Indians combined, without counting his own two hundred and sixty savages. Three brigades of volunteer infantry, aggregating one thousand five hundred men, were placed by Harrison in three lines, with their right on the river and their left on the swamp. These were under the command of Major-General Henry. Two other brigades numbering about one thousand men, comprising General Desha's command, were formed *en potence* on the left of Henry's command so as to hold the Indians in check, and prevent a flank attack. Colonel Johnson's mounted regiment was placed in front of Henry, formed in two columns. The regulars of the 27th Regiment were posted between the road and the river to seize the British 6-pounder, while the Indians with Harrison were to gain stealthily the British rear and by their attack convey to them the impression that their own Indians had turned against them. Counting Major Suggett's two hundred mounted spies, which led the advance as cavalry, the rank and file of both armies was as follows:—

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. | Indians. | Total. |
|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|--------|
| American..... | 2,620 | 1,200 | 260 | 4,080 |
| British..... | 356 | 38 | 500 | 894 |

Harrison had intended that the attack should be made by his infantry, but the intelligence which he received that the British were formed in open order decided him to order Johnson to charge with his mounted riflemen. "The measure,"

says Harrison in his official despatch, "was not sanctioned by anything that had been seen or heard of, but I was fully convinced that it would succeed. The American backwoodsmen ride better in the woods than any other people. A musket or a rifle is no impediment, they being accustomed to carry them on horseback from their earliest youth. I was persuaded, too, that the enemy would be quite unprepared for the shock and that they could not resist it." General Harrison was quite right in his conjecture. As Johnson with his one thousand two hundred mounted men advanced, they received two volleys from the British infantry which threw them into some confusion; but immediately after the second fire the cavalry charged with such overwhelming force as to



BATTLE OF MORAVIAN TOWN, OCTOBER, 1813

break the British line. The men of the 41st were thrown into such disorder by this sudden attack, that they could not be rallied, and most of those who were not killed or wounded were made prisoners. General Procter and his staff with the Provincial Dragoons sought safety in flight. The

Indians on the American left flank made a desperate effort to retrieve the fortunes of the day, but were finally defeated by overwhelming numbers and forced to retire, bearing with them the dead body of their leader, Tecumseh. They left thirty-three dead on the field of battle. The British lost twelve killed and twenty-two wounded, and, including the latter, four hundred and seventy-seven were taken prisoners on the day of the battle. These prisoners included one hundred and one officers and men in the hospital at Moravian Town, and most of the sixty-three officers and privates of the 41st Regiment in attendance upon them or on duty with the baggage. The total loss suffered by the British right division in the retreat from Amherstburg and in the battle was six hundred and thirty-one officers and men. The Americans lost in the battle fifteen killed and thirty wounded. They had won a notable victory at little cost and their general endeavoured to make the most of it. By concealing the fact that five of the six guns he captured were not in the battle at all, and also that a large proportion of his prisoners were invalids in the hospital, he was able to give still greater weight to the affair. Such tricks as these may pass without comment, but when Harrison claims for his troops "the palm of superior bravery," and casts reflections on the British for not being "magnanimous enough" to bring the flag of the 41st Regiment into the field "or it would have been taken," he shows himself the pretender that he was. The fact that twelve days after the battle General Procter had assembled at Ancaster two hundred and forty-six officers and men of his defeated army, shows that there was abundance of force to take care of the regimental flag.

Sir George Prevost, in a general order, passed a very severe censure on the right division for the defeat on the Thames, speaking of its "well earned laurels tarnished and its conduct calling loudly for reproach and censure." If Sir George Prevost had attended to his duty as commander-in-chief the right division would have been kept properly supplied and reinforced, the command of Lake Erie would have been re-

tained, and the army would not have been defeated. No regiment that fought in Canada during the war performed better service than the 41st, but a greater strain was put upon it than men could endure, and they finally suffered defeat. It is no new thing for a regiment, while formed in open order, to be broken by a sudden charge of cavalry. That happened at Quatre Bras to the 42nd Regiment, and also at Waterloo to another equally distinguished British regiment, yet these corps were not thereby supposed to have merited "reproach and censure." General Procter was tried by court-martial at Montreal, in December, 1814, on five charges, and sentenced to be publicly reprimanded and to be suspended from rank and pay for six months. The court found "that he did not take the proper measures for conducting the retreat; that he had, in many instances during the retreat and in the disposition of the force under his command, been erroneous in judgment, and in some ways deficient in those energetic and active exertions which the extraordinary difficulties of his situation so particularly required." The court, however, acquitted him as to any defect or reproach in his personal conduct. It is easy to see at this day that Procter was unjustly condemned. His difficulties all had their origin in the presence of the Indians, who, while professedly a part of his force, came and went as they pleased and were the cause of his retreat being so long delayed. Had the Indians acted honestly by Procter and remained with him in their original numbers, the American army, instead of being victorious on the Thames, would have been destroyed.

Harrison did not follow Procter after the battle but contented himself with burning Moravian Town. So terrified were the peaceful Christian inhabitants of this village that, as the Americans themselves testify, the squaws threw their infants into the river as they fled to prevent them from being butchered by the Americans. The Indians carried away the body of their chief, Tecumseh, but the barbarous Kentuckians found on the field a body which they took to be his, and mutilated it in a fashion that the worst savages

could not have surpassed. Strips of skin were torn from the limbs and were afterwards used by the Christian gentlemen who engaged in this disgusting work for razor strops. Yet Tecumseh had never injured a wounded man or a prisoner, but had invariably protected them from his less humane brethren.

Two days after the battle of the Thames, General Harrison left for Detroit, and his army on the same day commenced moving in that direction. They arrived at Sandwich on the tenth, in the midst of a furious storm of wind and snow, during which several of the vessels from the Thames were injured and much of the captured property lost. Thus ended the campaign; the Kentuckians returned home, and Harrison, with one thousand three hundred men, embarked for Buffalo to join the American army on the Niagara frontier.

CHAPTER XIII

CHATEAUGUAY AND CHRYSTLER'S FIELD

THE appointment of General James Wilkinson to the command of the northern army of the United States in place of General Dearborn, has already been noticed. Wilkinson was an old friend of Armstrong, the secretary of war, and the latter seems to have thought that the new commander would be a good instrument to carry out the plans he had formed for the invasion of Canada. These plans, which were approved by the government, involved the capture of Kingston and a descent from there to Montreal. Wilkinson offered some objections to this proposal which he deemed premature until more had been accomplished on the peninsula. Owing to this disagreement, when General Wilkinson arrived at Sacketts Harbour on the twentieth of August to take command of the army, no definite plan of operations had been determined upon, but at a council of officers held on the twenty-eighth it was determined to concentrate at Sacketts Harbour all the troops in that department, except those on Lake Champlain, preparatory to striking "a deadly blow somewhere."

This Lake Champlain army was the same that General Dearborn had assembled at Plattsburg twelve months before, and was under the command of General Wade Hampton. It consisted of more than four thousand infantry of the regular army, a squadron of cavalry numbering one hundred and eighty men, a train of artillery of ten guns, and a body of New York state militia, which brought its total strength to about five thousand five hundred men. This formidable force, which formed the right wing of Wilkinson's army,

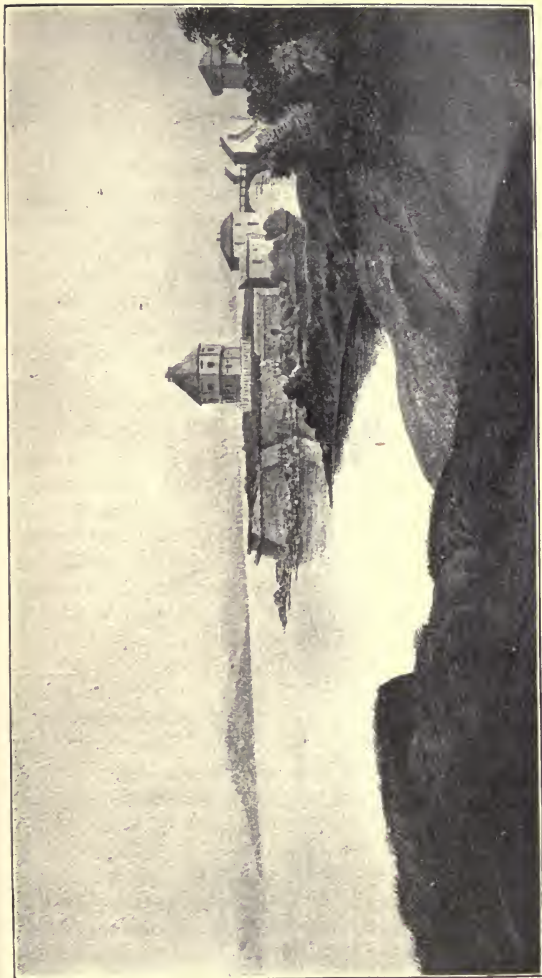
went into camp at Chateauguay Four Corners, a few miles south of the Canadian line, on the twenty-fourth of September and remained there awaiting orders.

As Secretary Armstrong, in consequence of the difference of opinion between them as to the plan of campaign, was led to distrust Wilkinson's judgment, he went to Sacketts Harbour early in September and established the seat of his department there. Such an unusual course appeared to be rendered necessary by the eccentric conduct of General Hampton, who had refused to take orders from Wilkinson, claiming that his was a separate command. Armstrong was still bent on attacking Kingston, and it was not until the sixteenth of October, when it was learned that the place had been reinforced, that the project was abandoned. The British had received intelligence of the meditated movement and on the second of the same month Major-General De Rottenburg had left the Niagara frontier for Kingston with the 49th and 104th Regiments, by which movement Major-General Vincent again became commander on that line. To compensate in some measure for this reduction in force, the army on the Niagara frontier had been reinforced by the 100th Regiment. It was now agreed by the war secretary and General Wilkinson that the attack should be made on Montreal, and that, while the latter with the main body of the army descended the St. Lawrence, General Hampton should advance down the Chateauguay River with his force and form a junction with Wilkinson at Isle Perrot.

The place selected for the concentration of Wilkinson's army was Grenadier Island, which is about fourteen miles distant from Sacketts Harbour and within four miles of the point where the St. Lawrence leaves Lake Ontario. The starting of the expedition had been delayed so long that the boats in which the troops were embarked were impeded by storms, fifteen of them were lost and many were damaged. Between the nineteenth and twenty-sixth of October all the troops reached Grenadier Island and were ready for active operations. The army thus assembled was the most for-

midable in numbers that had yet been collected for the invasion of Canada, and, according to the American official accounts, consisted of more than eight thousand eight hundred men. There were four brigades of infantry, the first consisting of the 5th, 12th, and 13th Regiments under General Boyd; the second of the 6th, 15th and 22nd Regiments under General Brown; the third of the 9th, 16th and 25th Regiments under General Covington; and the fourth of the 11th, 14th and 21st Regiments under General Swartwout. There was a fifth brigade consisting of light troops, and three regiments of artillery with thirty-eight fieldpieces and a battering train of twenty pieces, under General Porter, besides two regiments of dragoons. This army remained on Grenadier Island until the first of November, with the exception of Brown's brigade, some light troops and heavy artillery, which went down the St. Lawrence on the twenty-ninth of October and encamped at French Creek, near Clayton. This was done to cause the British to believe that Kingston was the point aimed at, so as to induce them to concentrate their troops there and uncover Montreal.

At the time that Wilkinson's troops commenced to embark at Sacketts Harbour for Grenadier Island, orders were sent to General Hampton on the Chateauguay to move down that river with his army, towards the St. Lawrence. This he began to do on the twenty-first of October. The change of his line of advance into Canada, from the road from Champlain to La Colle, to that by Chateauguay, had rendered it necessary for Lieutenant-Colonel De Salaberry to adopt new measures of defence. That vigilant and active officer took up a position on the left bank of the Chateauguay River at a point about six miles above the junction of the English River with the Chateauguay. The ground he occupied was a thick forest and its situation was favourable for defence. De Salaberry's left was protected by the river, which was unfordable except in one place just in the rear, where there was a rapid and the water was shallow. This ford was covered by a strong breastwork with a guard, and

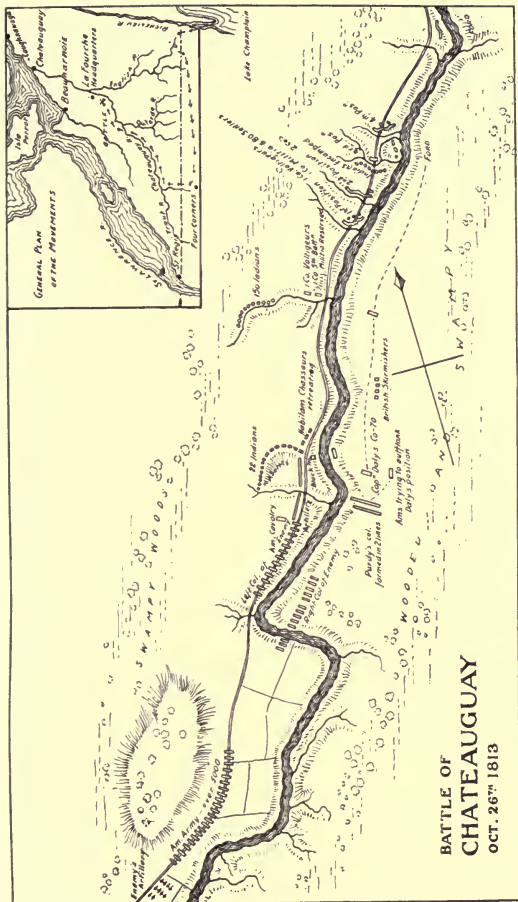


FORT CÔTEAU, NEAR MONTREAL.

From a water-colour in possession of the Toronto Public Library, by permission of the Toronto Public Library. This is probably the only original picture of this fort in existence.

some distance from it in advance, on the right bank of the river, was a strong picket of the Beauharnois militia to prevent the enemy from stealing suddenly upon the ford under cover of the forest. De Salaberry had protected his front by temporary breastworks formed by trees which had been felled by his woodmen. These breastworks lined the banks of four deep ditches or ravines, which ran at right angles to the river. A mile and a half in advance of the outermost of these breastworks he had obstructed the road, which ran parallel to the river, with an abattis of trees. The working party engaged in this service had with it as a protection from any sudden attack, two subaltern detachments of the *voltigeurs*. The successful defence of this chosen position was in the highest degree important, for the country behind it to the mouth of the Chateauguay River was mainly open and cultivated, and might have been easily traversed by an invading army. Lieutenant-Colonel De Salaberry's whole force with which to guard this vital point did not exceed eight hundred rank and file. It consisted of the two flank companies of the Canadian Fencibles, four companies of *voltigeurs*, and six flank companies of embodied militia and Chateauguay *chasseurs* under Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, late of the Glengarry Regiment. There were also at the post one hundred and seventy-two Indians under Captain Lamotte.

On the twenty-second of October the greater part of Hampton's army had crossed into Canada and encamped at Spear's, near the junction of the Outard with the Chateauguay River. A road for the artillery was made through the woods and Hampton's ten guns were brought up to his camp. Beyond Spear's were seven miles of open country, and then commenced the tract of open forest in which De Salaberry had taken his stand. After making a reconnaissance in which the ford on De Salaberry's left flank was discovered, Hampton on the evening of the twenty-fifth despatched Colonel Purdy with the 4th United States infantry and the light troops of the first brigade to force the ford and



MAP OF THE BATTLE OF CHATEAUGAY

fall upon the British rear at dawn. It was arranged that as soon as Purdy's musketry was heard General Hampton and General Izard should make an attack in front with three thousand five hundred men. The morning of the twenty-sixth dawned and Hampton's troops stood to their arms but there came no sign from Purdy. That officer, owing to the ignorance or treachery of his guide, had lost his way in the woods, and could neither find the ford nor the place from which he had started. The forenoon was far spent before he reached the vicinity of the ford, and in the meantime General Izard had advanced with the main body of the army to the front of De Salaberry's position. The two subaltern detachments of the *voltigeurs*, which were charged with the duty of guarding the working-party, immediately retired to the abattis, after exchanging shots with the enemy. De Salaberry, in the meantime, had arrived with the light company of the Canadian Fencibles commanded by Captain Ferguson, and two companies of his *voltigeurs* commanded by Captains Jean Baptiste and Juchereau Duchesnay. He posted Captain Ferguson's company on the right in front of the abattis in extended order, a few Abenakis Indians being placed in the woods on its right flank. To the left of the Fencibles, Jean Baptiste Duchesnay's company of *voltigeurs* occupied the grounds in extended order to the river, while the other company of *voltigeurs* under Captain Juchereau Duchesnay and about thirty-five sedentary militia, were thrown *en potence* along the margin of the river for the purpose of checking the enemy in the event of its appearing on the opposite side. The whole force thus drawn up to oppose the enemy did not exceed two hundred and fifty rank and file.

General Izard advanced with his three thousand five hundred men along the left bank of the river in open columns of sections, and wheeled his troops into line in front of the Canadians who opened a brisk fire. The Americans replied with battalion volleys, which, however, were for the most part ineffective. The Canadian skirmishers were

driven back to the abattis, but beyond this not one inch of ground was gained by Izard's formidable force. The Americans, mistaking for a retreat the retirement of the skirmishers to the main body, set up a shout of victory which was replied to by one of defiance from the Canadians, and Colonel De Salaberry, at the same moment, ordered his bugler to sound the advance. This was heard by Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, who was with the reserves, and he, thinking De Salaberry was in need of support, caused his own buglers to answer, and advanced with two of his companies. At the same time he sent ten or twelve buglers into the adjoining woods, who sounded the advance all along an extended line, and led the Americans to believe that they had a large army to contend with. This deterred them from making any further advance until Purdy's flank attack had been heard from.

This flank attack did not prosper any more than that of General Izard on the Canadian front. Purdy's heavy force had succeeded in driving back about sixty Chateauguay *chasseurs* under Captain Bruyère, but they were speedily reinforced by the light company of the third battalion of embodied militia under Captain Daley, and the advance guard of the Americans was driven back. Purdy's detachment, however, was too powerful to be resisted by so small a body, and it was pressing along the right bank of the river in overwhelming numbers, when it received a heavy fire from Captain Juchereau Duchesnay's company of *voltigeurs* which lay concealed on the opposite bank of the Chateauguay. The Americans were instantly thrown into the greatest confusion and fled into the woods. A few of them managed to swim across the river, and carried to General Hampton such alarming accounts of the enormous number of British and Canadians on the right bank of the river, that he immediately ordered a retreat. The rest of Purdy's men, frantic with terror, broke into scattered detachments, which, mistaking each other for the enemy, kept up a spirited engagement the most of the night.

The battle of Chateauguay was won by three hundred and eighty Canadians—most of them French-Canadians, against more than ten times their force of American regulars. The Canadian loss was only two killed, sixteen wounded and four missing. Lossing states the American loss at "about fifteen killed and twenty-three wounded," but, as more than ninety dead bodies and graves were found on the right bank of the river after the battle, we are forced to the conclusion that Lossing in this, as in many of his other statements, is not telling the truth. Twenty prisoners were also taken by the Canadians. Chateauguay was a sad blow to American pride. Major-General Wool, who was there, said long afterwards: "No officer who had any regard for his reputation would voluntarily acknowledge himself as having been engaged in it." Colonel Purdy, in an official report of the affair which he wrote to Wilkinson, said that he and other officers believed that General Hampton was under the influence of a too free use of spirituous liquors. Yet Hampton's drunkenness on the left bank of the river would not account for Purdy's extraordinary failure on the right, which was the real cause of the disaster. Lossing endeavours to lessen the importance of Chateauguay by saying that "it has been unwarrantably dignified with the character of a battle." Yet the same Lossing calls Colonel Cass's affair at the river Aux Canards in which one Indian was scalped, "the first battle and victory in the second war for independence."

Hampton retired from Chateauguay to his camp at Spear's and three days later retreated with his whole force to Chateauguay Four Corners, harassed by the victorious Canadians and by the Indians under Captain Lamotte. On the eleventh of November another retrograde movement was made and Hampton retired to Plattsburg. Thus ended this formidable invasion of Lower Canada by the right wing of the army of the north. As an acknowledgment of the bravery of the embodied militia of Lower Canada in this and other engagements, the Prince Regent granted a pair of colours to

each of the five battalions, a mark of his approbation which was fully deserved and highly appreciated.

It is now time to return to Grenadier Island and French Creek, where Wilkinson's army of eight thousand men halted on the first of November in blissful ignorance of the defeat and retreat of Hampton. It should be understood by the reader that in all the operations which followed, down to the eve of the final abandonment of the expedition, General Wilkinson and his men were acting under the full belief that Hampton's army was advancing victoriously through Lower Canada to join them on the St. Lawrence. While General Wilkinson's army was being transported from Grenadier Island to French Creek, Commodore Chauncey undertook to blockade the British in Kingston harbour. But in spite of his efforts, two brigs, two schooners and eight gunboats got out and attacked the Americans at French Creek on the afternoon of the first, and the forenoon of the second of November. It was not until the appearance of Chauncey's fleet that they retired. The Americans lost two killed and four wounded. The British vessels, although fired at with red-hot shot, sustained little or no damage. Wilkinson arrived at French Creek on the third, and on the morning of the fifth, just at dawn, the American army embarked in more than three hundred boats and scows, and, protected by twelve heavy gunboats, began to move down the St. Lawrence.

The British up to this moment had been unable to discover whether the expedition was intended to attack Kingston, Prescott, or Montreal. Yet their vigilance was such that the instant the Americans left French Creek their enemies were in pursuit of them. A heavy armed British galley and several gunboats followed them and attacked their rear. The flotilla arrived at Morristown early the same evening, having been annoyed by the British gunboats all the way down. As the batteries of Fort Wellington at Prescott were considered too formidable to be passed in the day time, Wilkinson halted on the following day three miles above Ogdensburg, and landed his ammunition and all his troops except a sufficient

number to man the boats. That night the boats ran past Fort Wellington with little loss, and again embarked the troops and ammunition at the Red Mill, four miles below Ogdensburg.

On the seventh, Wilkinson landed Colonel Alexander Maccomb with a select corps of one thousand two hundred men, and Lieutenant-Colonel Forsyth with his riflemen, at the head of the Gallops Rapids, to drive away the British from the prominent points of the river, and particularly from Matilda where the St. Lawrence is little more than five hundred yards wide. On the previous day, General Wilkinson had addressed a proclamation to the people of Canada which is in a very different strain from that of Hull. In it he stated that he had invaded the Canadas to conquer, not to destroy, "to subdue the forces of His Britannic Majesty, not to war against his unoffending subjects." He promised protection to the persons and property of those who remained quietly at home. Only the old and feeble, however, could be persuaded to do this, for the general in his official despatches complains of the "active universal hostility of the male inhabitants of the country." On the eighth, Wilkinson's army arrived at the White House, opposite Matilda, about eighteen miles below Ogdensburg, and here the general called a council of his officers, consisting of Generals Lewis, Boyd, Brown, Porter, Covington and Swartwout. He had received a report from a spy employed by Colonel Swift which stated the number and position of the British forces to be—at Côteau du Lac, six hundred under Colonel Murray, strongly fortified with artillery; about three hundred artillery, but without ammunition, at the Cedar Rapids; two hundred sailors, four hundred marines, and a body of militia at Montreal, with no fortifications; and two thousand five hundred regulars daily expected from Quebec. The same agent also reported the number of the militia between Kingston and Quebec to be twenty thousand. Wilkinson stated his own force to be seven thousand non-commissioned officers and men, and put the question to the

council as to whether the army should proceed to Montreal. This was answered in the affirmative by all the officers, the more readily as Hampton had been ordered to join them with his army at St. Regis, and it was fully expected he would be there by the time they reached that place.

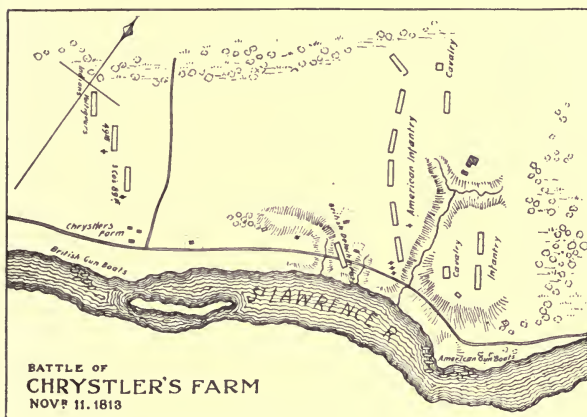
Macomb's detachment of one thousand two hundred men encountered no other opposition on the Canadian shore than that of about sixty militia, who, of course, were not numerous enough to seriously impede his march. But a British force was rapidly approaching which was destined to prove even more annoying to the Americans than the "teasing" British gunboats which hovered on their rear. The troops at Kingston, in the beginning of November, which were available for service down the St. Lawrence, were the 49th Regiment, and nine companies of the second battalion of the 89th. The former had arrived from the Niagara frontier a few days before, and its sadly reduced state from the sickness which had prevailed there may be inferred from the fact that when it left Queenston only sixteen of its fifty commissioned officers were fit for duty. On the fourth of November, the two flank companies of this regiment were pushed forward to Fort Wellington, and on the morning of the seventh, the remainder of the regiment, the nine companies of the 89th, a small detachment of artillery and two 6-pounders, set out in the same direction. This detachment, which was embarked in the schooners *Beresford* and *Sidney Smith*, seven gunboats and a number of *bateaux*, did not number more than five hundred and sixty rank and file. Captain Mulcaster, who commanded the flotilla, skilfully evaded Chauncey's blockading squadron, and reached Fort Wellington on the eighth, the same day that Wilkinson held his council of war. Lieutenant-Colonel J. W. Morrison of the 89th, who commanded this "Corps of Observation" was joined at Fort Wellington by the two flank companies of the 49th, detachments of the fencibles and *voltigeurs*, a few provincial dragoons and some militia artillery with a 6-pounder, in all two hundred and forty rank and file. This reinforcement raised the strength

of Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison's little army to eight hundred rank and file.

At Fort Wellington Captain Mulcaster substituted *bateaux* for his two schooners, and on the ninth, landed Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison and his force at Point Iroquois, a short distance from Matilda. The British were now close on the heels of the American army, which was advancing down the St. Lawrence in boats and by land. That very morning General Brown had crossed to the Canadian shore with his brigade and the dragoons, to march down the river in connection with Colonel Macomb's detachment. A few hours later, when the British were discovered approaching, General Boyd was detached with his brigade to reinforce Brown, with orders to cover his march, and, if attacked by the pursuing British, "to turn about and beat them." On the same evening General Wilkinson's army halted at Williamsburg. The American commander-in-chief had learned that a formidable British force was collected at the foot of the Long Sault, and on the morning of the tenth, General Brown was sent forward to dislodge them. This formidable force consisted of three hundred Dundas and Glengarry militia under Captain Dennis of the 49th, and thirty Indians. When this officer was apprised of Brown's approach, he took immediate measures to impede his progress by destroying the bridge over Hoop Pole Creek, and distributing his men in the thick woods on the opposite bank from which they maintained a severe fire on Brown's forces. The latter was thus delayed several hours in his advance, and time enough given for the removal of all the stores at Cornwall. In this skirmish the Americans lost several killed and wounded, but, although they used cannon, they did not succeed in inflicting any damage on the militia.

While General Brown was thus engaged with the militia, General Wilkinson remained at Williamsburg awaiting intelligence from him. About noon he heard Brown's artillery down the river, and at the same time was attacked by the British gunboats under Captain Mulcaster. Wilkinson was

obliged to land two 18-pounders to resist this new danger, and most of the day was spent in disembarking and re-embarking the heavy guns. Only two miles were made by the Americans that day, and in the afternoon Wilkinson's vessels anchored for the night just below Weaver's Point and almost opposite the farm of Mr. John Chrystler. General Boyd's force was also encamped close by. It was not until ten o'clock on the morning of the eleventh that any message was received from Brown. He had reached the foot of the Long Sault, but his troops had been drenched by the heavy rain and were obliged to pass the preceding night without any shelter. He asked that the boats with supplies be sent to him as speedily as possible, and Wilkinson had given orders



MAP OF THE BATTLE OF CHRYSTLER'S FIELD

for the flotilla to proceed and for General Boyd to resume his march, when the appearance of the British in his rear forced him to halt and give them battle. Thus was brought about the famous battle of Chrystler's Field.

The force which was drawn up at Chrystler's to receive the Americans was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison and was the same "Corps of Observation" that has already been described. It consisted of three hundred and forty rank and file of the 49th Regiment, about three hundred of the 89th and detachments of the Canadian Fencibles and *voltigeurs*, a few of the royal artillery and militia artillery with three guns and half a dozen militia dragoons, in all about eight hundred rank and file of white troops with thirty Indians under Lieutenant Anderson. Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison posted his men in a position which he had previously selected, his right resting on the river and his left on a pine wood, and showing a front of about seven hundred yards. The ground occupied was perfectly open, and the troops were thus disposed: the flank companies of the 49th Regiment and the detachment of Canadian Fencibles with one 6-pounder, under Lieutenant-Colonel Pearson, were on the right, a little advanced on the road which skirts the river and passes Chrystler's house; three companies of the 89th Regiment under Captain Barnes with a 6-pounder were formed *en echelon* with the advance and supporting its left; the remainder of the 49th and 89th Regiments thrown more to the rear, with one gun, formed the main body's reserve and extended to the woods on the left which were occupied by the *voltigeurs* under Major Herriot and the Indians under Lieutenant Anderson.

It is difficult to get at the exact force that the Americans brought into the field in this battle. General Wilkinson, in his first official despatch in regard to the affair, says: "It is impossible to say with accuracy what was our number on the field, because it consisted of indefinite detachments taken from the boats to render safe the passage of the Sault." In the next paragraph of his letter, however, he says: "Our force engaged might have reached one thousand six hundred, or one thousand seven hundred men, but actually did not exceed one thousand eight hundred." But in a second despatch written two days later, which he asks the

American secretary of war to consider as an appendage to his first official communication, he says: "Having received information late in the day that the contest had been somewhat dubious, I ordered up a reserve of six hundred men whom I had ordered to stand by their arms under Lieutenant-Colonel Upham, who gallantly led them into action, which terminated a few minutes after their arrival on the ground." Here we have an admission from the American general himself that he had two thousand four hundred men engaged, or three times the British force. Yet it is not easy to understand why his available force should have been so small. A few days before he had announced his army as numbering seven thousand non-commissioned officers and privates. After making allowance for the detached forces under Brown, there certainly would be four thousand men left with Wilkinson, of whom all but a few hundreds remaining in the boats might have taken part in the battle. It seems impossible, therefore, to resist the conclusion that the American general, who, at the time of the battle was confined to his bed, had been misinformed as to the details of the engagement and the number of men he had in the field. Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison described the enemy as "consisting of two brigades of infantry and a regiment of cavalry, amounting to between three and four thousand men." There were in reality parts of three brigades with three brigadier-generals. The enemy brought six guns into action.

General Wilkinson's orders, as described by himself, were for Brigadier-General Boyd, "to throw down the detachments of his command, assigned to him in the order of the preceding day, and composed of his own, Covington's and Swartwout's brigades, into three columns, to march upon the enemy, and outflank them if possible and take their artillery." About two p.m., Boyd endeavoured to carry out these orders. Swartwout was detached with the fourth brigade to attack the British advance, which was composed of light troops, while Covington was directed to take a position at supporting distance with the third brigade. The

British skirmishers fell back on the main body and at 2.30 the action became general. The whole of Swartwout's brigade and part of the first brigade under Colonel Coles now endeavoured to turn the British left, while the third brigade under General Covington, made a front attack. Swartwout's flank attack was repulsed by the six companies of the 89th, formed *en potence* with the eight companies of the 49th, both corps moving forward and occasionally firing by platoons. As their united strength did not exceed four hundred and twenty rank and file, the character of their achievement in defeating one entire American brigade and part of another will be understood. The efforts of the enemy were next directed against the British right, and to repulse this movement, which was made by General Covington's brigade with four cannon, the 49th took ground in that direction *en echelon*, followed by the 89th. When within half-musket shot, these two regiments formed in line under a heavy but irregular fire from the enemy. The 49th was then directed to charge one of the enemy's guns, but this movement was checked in consequence of a charge by the American dragoons on the right, for if persisted in it would have exposed the 49th to an attack on their flank and rear by the cavalry. These dragoons, however, were received in so gallant a manner by the three companies of the 89th, under Captain Barnes, that they speedily retreated, and Barnes, following up the advantage he had gained, by a sudden charge captured the gun. This was the turning point of the battle. General Covington fell mortally wounded and his brigade became confused. The fourth brigade was also pushed back, and it was followed in its retreat by the first, under Colonel Coles. At half-past four the Americans had given way at all points, and their retreat was rapidly becoming a rout when their disorderly flight was partially checked by the arrival of a reinforcement of six hundred men under Lieutenant-Colonel Upham. The American light infantry attempted to cover their retreat, but were driven away by a judicious movement made by Lieutenant-Colonel Pearson with the flank companies of the

49th and the detachment of Canadian Fencibles. The British occupied the ground from which the Americans had been driven, but as they had no cavalry they could not pursue the routed enemy.

In this battle the loss of the British was twenty-two killed, one hundred and forty-seven wounded and twelve missing. The Americans stated their loss at one hundred and two killed and two hundred and thirty-seven wounded. The British took more than one hundred prisoners. As General Boyd, in reply to an inquiry by General Wilkinson, admitted that he could not maintain himself on the Canadian shore the night of the battle, it was necessary to embark his whole detachment, with the exception of the dragoons and light artillery which were marched down the river. The embarkation was effected under cover of darkness, and the American flotilla proceeded about four miles towards Cornwall and landed the defeated army on the American side of the St. Lawrence where no British troops could molest them. On the following day the troops were re-embarked and the flotilla ran the Long Sault and formed a junction with General Brown's detachment at Barnhart's three miles above Cornwall.

At this place an unpleasant surprise awaited Wilkinson. A short time after his arrival Colonel Atkinson, General Hampton's inspector-general, waited on him with a letter from that officer in which he declined to join Wilkinson at St. Regis as he had been ordered, and informed him that he was marching to Lake Champlain to coöperate in the attack on Montreal from that point. Wilkinson called a council of war which decided that the attack on Montreal should be abandoned for that season, and that the army should go into winter quarters at French Mills on the Salmon River. This programme was at once carried out, and on the following day the entire army crossed over to the American shore. Their movements were hastened by the news that there was a considerable British force at Côteau du Lac and that Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison's "Corps of Observa-

tion," which had defeated them at Chrystler's, was close at hand.

The failure of Wilkinson's expedition was the greatest of the series of humiliations which American pride had to endure in the course of the war. From the magnitude of the preparations that had been made and the number of men employed, success might reasonably have been expected. More than fourteen thousand disciplined troops, including Hampton's army, had been engaged in the invasion of Canada, yet all their efforts had come to naught. General Wilkinson himself appears to have been wholly incompetent, and the same charge of intemperance which was made against Hampton was also applied to him. It has been stated that the "sickness" of which this general complained in his letters, was due to over-indulgence in spirituous liquors, and that he was lying drunk in his boat while the battle of Chrystler's Field was going on.

The sedentary militia of Lower Canada, who had been called out for active service in view of the threatened invasion, and had responded with alacrity, were dismissed to their homes by a general order of the seventeenth of November, in which they were justly complimented for their loyalty and zeal. A great danger had been averted and the last chance which the Americans had of successfully attacking Kingston or Montreal, had passed away.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BURNING OF NEWARK

THE extreme anxiety of the American secretary of war to make the armies of Wilkinson and Hampton so strong that a successful invasion of Lower Canada would be the crowning effort of the year, had been the means of reducing the American force on the Niagara frontier and bringing operations there to a standstill. As it was considered that more glory was to be acquired before Montreal than in Upper Canada, all the regular officers of high rank were with Wilkinson and Hampton, and Fort George was left in command of Brigadier-General McClure of the New York militia. In the absence of General De Rottenburg, who had been called to Kingston, General Vincent again commanded the British forces on the Niagara frontier, having his headquarters near St. Davids. On the ninth of October the news of Procter's defeat on the Thames reached him, and as it was considered certain that Harrison would follow and attempt to capture the British post at Burlington Heights, it became necessary for Vincent to fall back and concentrate his army at that point. Accordingly the delicate operation of withdrawing the army from the front of a very superior enemy was commenced the same day, and conducted with such skill that the main body had been nearly twelve hours on the march before the disappearance of the pickets notified the American commander that the British were gone. General McClure, with the bulk of his army, followed as far as Twelve Mile Creek, but the rear guard, consisting of the 100th Regiment and the light company of the 8th under the command of Colonel Murray, presented such a formidable front that he did not attempt

any attack. Vincent reached Burlington Heights without loss and was there joined by the remnant of General Procter's army numbering two hundred and forty-six officers and men.

General McClure, in a proclamation addressed to the people of Upper Canada which he issued at this time, chose to treat the retirement of the British army from before Fort George as an abandonment of the province. Matters certainly wore a very unpromising aspect and the province was much nearer being abandoned than most people were aware of at the time, for as soon as Sir George Prevost heard of Procter's defeat he sent orders to General Vincent directing him to evacuate all the British posts west of Kingston. That such an order should have been issued, shows the extreme folly of a commander-in-chief attempting to direct operations from a distance without a knowledge of all the facts. Sir George Prevost doubtless believed when he issued the order that Harrison was advancing in force through the western peninsula, and that a speedy retreat was the only way to save the army. Fortunately for the interests of Canada and the credit of the British arms, the officers who were charged with the execution of the order had better information than the commander-in-chief and were not afraid of responsibility. General Vincent called a council of war at Burlington Heights which decided that the order should not be obeyed and that the army should not retreat. This noble resolve, which was taken in one of the darkest hours of the war, at a time when the Americans looked upon Montreal as already theirs, was the means of winning back all that had been lost on the Niagara frontier that year. It nerved the arm of every British soldier and Canadian militiaman to greater efforts, and inspired the hearts of all the people of the province with renewed courage.

The retirement of the British from the vicinity of Fort George gave General McClure a free hand for the practice of the only species of warfare in which he was competent to shine—that of marauding and plundering. American soldiers

were quartered on the inhabitants of Newark and the farm-houses in its vicinity were systematically robbed by McClure's troops. This general had offered the friendship and protection of his government to the people of the province, but these fine-sounding words proved to be without meaning. Friendship and protection were only for those who would renounce their allegiance and coöperate with him in the work of making Upper Canada an American state. All others



A FARM-HOUSE IN 1812

From "Sangster's Niagara River and Falls," Vol. 1.

who preferred to remain British subjects were to be dragged into submission. Bands of American soldiers scoured the country, pillaging and destroying the houses of the inhabitants, and carrying off the leading men to the American side of the Niagara River where they were incarcerated in filthy dungeons. One of the most prominent of McClure's agents in this detestable work was one Wilcox, a British subject of Irish birth, who at the time of the war was a resident of York, editor of a newspaper and a member of the legislature of Upper Canada. Wilcox took strong ground in favour of the Americans and tried to persuade the legislature and people of Upper Canada to refuse to resist the invaders. It was to Wilcox and men of the same stripe that the legislature referred, when, in its loyal address at the opening of the

war, it spoke of the emissaries that the Americans had spread through the country to seduce their fellow-subjects from their allegiance. Wilcox, finding the atmosphere of York too warm for him, fled soon after Hull's surrender and took refuge in New York state, and it was quite in keeping with his character that when he turned his back on Canada, he should have taken with him a horse which he had stolen from Lieutenant Ryerson of the Norfolk militia. This traitor and thief, who afterwards served in the American army until he was killed at Fort Erie, was a fitting instrument in the hands of McClure to harry, rob and harass the people of Newark and its vicinity. The people of the Niagara frontier suffered incredible hardships and had to endure many insults, but they preserved their manhood and their loyalty.

The spirit of the loyal inhabitants of Upper Canada was well illustrated by an event which took place in the county of Norfolk, in November of that year. A band of traitors like Wilcox, and several Americans, had been engaged in plundering the houses of the people of that county while the able-bodied population were serving with the army. Forty-five officers and men of the Norfolk militia, who had returned to their homes at the end of the campaign, formed themselves into an association, and under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Bostwick marched against the marauders whom they fell in with on the Lake Erie shore, a few miles from Dover. In the engagement which ensued, several of the robbers were killed and wounded, and eighteen taken prisoners. Fifteen of these were convicted of high treason, eight of them hanged and the other seven transported. This hardy and successful enterprise received the approval of the president of the province, Major-General De Rottenburg, in a district general order in which the engagement was pointed out as a striking instance of the beneficial effects of unanimity and exertion in the cause of the country.

McClure, whose force now consisted of nearly three thousand volunteers and militia and a few hundred regulars, continued his course of outrage and robbery on the inhabitants



CAPTAIN OF UNITED STATES INFANTRY, 1813

within his lines, until it became imperatively necessary for the British commander to attempt to do something to check it. Colonel Murray, who commanded the British advance posts, on his own urgent representations obtained permission from General Vincent to make a demonstration against the Americans, but with strict injunctions not to go beyond Forty Mile Creek. The news of Murray's advance with three hundred and eighty men of the 100th Regiment, a few volunteers and less than one hundred Indians, was the signal for McClure to retreat from Twenty Mile Creek where he was posted. Colonel Murray, having obtained permission to extend his march, advanced as far as Twelve Mile Creek and compelled McClure to retire to Fort George. But even there he did not deem himself safe, although the fort had been greatly strengthened during the summer and autumn, and he resolved to abandon Canada altogether. Before doing so, however, he completed the record of his vandalism and cruelty by an act which has made his name forever infamous in the history of the war.

The beautiful village of Newark, although it had suffered somewhat in the various contests which had occurred around it, still remained a pleasant and habitable town. It contained about one hundred and fifty houses and two churches. From the very first moment when McClure obtained the command he seems to have cast an evil eye on Newark, and obtained from Secretary Armstrong the following order which he afterwards used to justify his conduct.

“War Department, October 4th, 1813.

“SIR:—Understanding that the defence of the post committed to your charge may render it proper to destroy the town of Newark, you are hereby directed to apprise the inhabitants of this circumstance and invite them to remove themselves and their effects to some place of greater safety.

“JOHN ARMSTRONG.”

Armed with this order, McClure could afford to wait until his vengeance against the unfortunate people of Newark

could be sated to the utmost. December came with its bitter blasts and blinding snow-storms, so that any living creature who was left without shelter was foredoomed to death. On the eighteenth of the month, which chanced to be a Friday, just before nightfall, McClure sent his officers to notify the inhabitants of Newark that he was about to destroy their town, and that such of them as desired to save any of their effects should remove them at once. Half an hour later the incendiaries followed, and soon every house in the village was in flames. The sun had set, but the sky was lighted up with the conflagration which told of the cruel and wanton destruction of a peaceful town, and the inhabitants of Newark were homeless. More than four hundred helpless women and children were driven out, without food or shelter, to endure the rigours of a Canadian winter that dreadful night. The aged and feeble, the sick and dying, and the new-born infant were alike sharers in the common doom which had been decreed against them by an infamous government, and executed by a man still more infamous than the men he served. Every building in Newark, with the exception of a single house, that of Mr. Gordon, was destroyed.

Murray from his camp at Twelve Mile Creek saw the conflagration of Newark, and divining its purport hurried towards Fort George, hoping to surprise the garrison. The cowardly McClure became panic-stricken as he approached, and fled across the river in such fear that he left all his tents standing, sufficient to accommodate one thousand five hundred men. So great was his haste to get away that the new barracks which had just been built were left unconsumed, the fort was not blown up, and a considerable number of cannon as well as a quantity of stores were left behind. Thus was the whole Niagara frontier once more cleared of the invader, and the people of this beautiful and highly cultivated region rescued from a merciless enemy. Once more the British flag floated over Fort George, which the Americans had been good enough to strengthen and improve so greatly that it could have stood a regular siege by a formidable

force, if defended by men of courage instead of the cowardly incendiaries who had occupied it.

The destruction of Newark excited the strongest feelings of indignation throughout Canada and led to speedy retaliation. As it was evident that Sir George Prevost's system of conducting warfare without offending the enemy was a failure, some other method of bringing the Americans to a due sense of their conduct had to be found. Lieutenant-General Drummond had arrived from England to relieve Major-General De Rottenburg of the presidency and military command in Upper Canada, and he, with Major-General Riall, reached the Niagara frontier soon after the flight of the Americans from the Canadian shore. Murray represented to him the demoralized condition of the enemy and the probability of a retaliatory attack being successful, and General Drummond, ever ready where prompt action was demanded, gave the enterprise proposed by the daring colonel his immediate approval. It was resolved to capture Fort Niagara, if possible, and sweep the Americans from their own frontier. To effect this, a sufficient number of *bateaux* had to be brought overland from Burlington Bay, and this arduous work was accomplished by the active exertions of Captain Elliott, of the quartermaster-general's department, and Captain Kirby and Lieutenants Ball, Servos and Hamilton of the militia.

All necessary preparations being completed on the night of the eighteenth, Colonel Murray crossed the Niagara River and landed the detachment intended for the assault on Fort Niagara at Five Mile Meadows, about three miles distant from the fort. The force under Colonel Murray's command numbered about five hundred and fifty rank and file, and consisted of the effective men of the 100th Regiment; the grenadiers of the 1st Royal Scots; the flank companies of the second battalion of the 41st, which had recently arrived from England, and a small detachment of Royal Artillery. Fort Niagara was a very strong work mounting twenty-seven cannon, and had a garrison of four hundred and forty regulars. To capture such a fortress by a night assault was cer-

tainly a most daring undertaking, yet this was what the British attempted and accomplished. At four o'clock that Sunday morning the attack was made. Murray's dispositions were admirable, and calculated to win success even in the event of a desperate resistance. An advance guard consisting of twenty men of the 100th Regiment under Lieutenant Dawson, was followed by the grenadiers of the same regiment under Captain Fawcett and a few artillerymen. Then followed five companies of the 100th Regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, which were to assault the main gate and escalate the works adjacent. Three companies of the 100th under Captain Martin were detached to storm the eastern demi-bastion. Captain Bailey, with the grenadiers of the 1st Royal Scots, was directed to attack the salient angle of the fortification, while the flank companies of the 41st under Lieutenant Bullock were ordered to support the principal attack. Each party was provided with scaling-ladders and axes. Every detail of the programme of assault was carried out with the most brilliant success. Lieutenant Dawson's advance party succeeded in cutting off two of the enemy's pickets, and surprising the sentries on the glacis and at the gate, by which means the watchword was obtained. While Captain Martin with his three companies of the 100th Regiment was storming the eastern demi-bastion, five companies of the same regiment under Colonel Murray in person entered the fort by the main gate which had been left open for the return of the guard from relieving sentries. The main-guard rushed out of the south-eastern blockhouse and attempted to drive the British back, but was instantly overpowered. Some of the garrison escaped to the old mess-house, and kept up from it a severe fire on the British, but they were speedily compelled to surrender. In a few minutes all was over and the British flag was waving from Fort Niagara.

The capture of this formidable stronghold was certainly one of the most brilliant passages of the war, and it was accomplished with the inconsiderable loss of six killed and five

wounded. The loss of the Americans was sixty-five killed, fourteen wounded and three hundred and forty-four taken prisoners. Of the entire garrison only about twenty, some of them badly wounded, escaped. The spoils captured consisted of twenty-seven cannon, three thousand stand of arms and many rifles, besides an immense quantity of ordnance and commissariat stores, as well as of clothing and camp equipage of every description. Fort Niagara remained in our possession until the end of the war. Its capture was the means of releasing eight respectable Canadian inhabitants who had been dragged from their homes on the other side of the river and immured within its walls to gratify the cowardly McClure.

While Fort Niagara was being stormed, General Riall was waiting at Queenston with about five hundred men of the Royal Scots and 42nd Regiments and when the fort was taken the firing of a single large cannon from one of its bastions gave him the signal to cross over to Lewiston. He had been preceded by about five hundred Indians who attacked and routed the American militia stationed there, with the loss of eight killed. The Indians then set fire to Lewiston. When General Riall crossed the enemy had disappeared, but he captured two cannon, a considerable quantity of small arms and ammunition, and two hundred barrels of flour. The villages of Youngstown, Manchester, and the Indian Tuscarora were also burnt, and Fort Schlosser was destroyed. Major Mallory, who with a band of traitors styled "Canadian Volunteers," undertook to stop the British advance guard, was driven back with a loss of eight or ten killed. The whole American Niagara frontier from Lake Ontario to Tonewanto Creek, a distance of twenty-five miles, was cleared not only of the armed enemy, but of houses and inhabitants. Only the breaking down of the bridge over this creek prevented General Riall from advancing immediately to Buffalo. McClure, writing on the twenty-second of December from that place, announced that he had called out the militia of Genesee, Niagara and Chautauqua counties

en masse, that volunteers were coming forward in great numbers and that Buffalo was perfectly secure. It did not take many days to demonstrate the erroneous character of this opinion, for Buffalo was doomed. McClure, two days after he wrote this despatch, became panic-stricken at the prospect of having to meet the British in the field and handed over his command to Major-General Amos Hall. The latter reviewed his troops on the twenty-seventh and found himself in command of upwards of two thousand men who were stationed at Black Rock and Buffalo. Such was the helpless condition to which the people of the great state of New York had become reduced in the course of the contest into which they had entered with so much zeal.

Lieutenant-General Drummond took up his headquarters at Chippawa on the twenty-eighth, and on the following day reconnoitred the enemy's position at Black Rock. That night, General Riall with four companies of the 8th Regiment, two hundred and fifty of the 41st, the light company of the 89th, the grenadiers of the 100th Regiment, and fifty volunteer militia, the whole numbering less than six hundred rank and file, with one hundred and twenty Indians, crossed to the American shore and landed about two miles below Black Rock. The light infantry of the 89th being in advance, surprised and captured the greater part of the enemy's pickets and secured the bridge over the Shegoquody Creek, the planks of which had already been loosened ready to be carried off. The 41st and the grenadiers of the 100th Regiment crossed the bridge and took possession of the "Sailor's battery" there. General Hall, whose headquarters were between Buffalo and Black Rock, sent forward Lieutenant-Colonels Warren and Churchill with a body of militia and Indians to dislodge the British, but the Americans fled at the first fire. Colonel Chapin and Major Adams with about five hundred militia were then ordered to the front, with precisely the same result. As soon as the British gave them a volley, they took to their heels.

At daybreak General Riall moved forward with his force,

the four companies of the 8th Regiment and the light company of the 89th leading, and the 41st and grenadiers of the 100th being in reserve. At the same time the 1st Royal Scots, about eight hundred strong, with a detachment of the 19th Dragoons, the whole commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon, were crossing the river for the purpose of effecting a landing above the batteries at Black Rock. General Hall had succeeded in drawing up his whole force on the beach in order to oppose the landing of the British, and owing to some mistake of the pilots, several boats in which the Royal Scots were, grounded, and were exposed to a heavy fire from the four guns on the Black Rock battery and Hall's infantry on the beach. The five British guns on the Canadian side of the river, however, responded vigorously, and Riall's force advancing on the enemy's right, a landing was effected after the gallant Scots had suffered severe loss. Hall's two thousand militia, volunteers and regulars made a very poor fight after the British had succeeded in landing, and in the course of a few minutes fled towards Buffalo, about two miles distant, as fast as their legs could carry them. Near Buffalo an attempt was made to check the pursuing British by the fire of a fieldpiece posted on a height which commanded the road, but the Americans, although in considerable force, were unable to maintain their position for a moment and fled to the woods, leaving Buffalo to its fate. Hall, with about three hundred of his men, escaped to Eleven Mile Creek, three miles from Buffalo. About one hundred and thirty of the Americans were taken prisoners, but their loss in killed and wounded has never been officially stated. General Riall estimated it at between three and four hundred. The British had thirty-one killed, seventy-two wounded and nine missing. Of the killed and wounded, six were Indians. The militia volunteers suffered a loss of three killed and six wounded out of fifty men engaged.

The British captured at Black Rock and Buffalo eight cannon which had been used in the defence of these places.

They took and destroyed a large quantity of public stores, and they burnt the United States war vessels *Ariel*, *Little Belt*, *Chippewa* and *Trippe*, all of which had been engaged in the battle of Lake Erie a few months before. Both Buffalo and Black Rock were committed to the flames, and thus in less than three weeks from the date of its destruction was Newark signally avenged. The British having completed their work retired to the Canadian side of the river holding possession only of Fort Niagara. The retaliation by which the whole American frontier on the Niagara was laid waste was no doubt severe, but it was only by the exercise of



HOW THE CITY OF BUFFALO REMEMBERS THE WAR OF 1812-14

A memorial tablet in brass.

such measures that the American people could be brought to their senses and taught to respect the methods of civilized warfare. Sir George Prevost in a proclamation dated January 12th, 1814, stated that it was not his intention to pursue further a system of retaliatory warfare unless the future conduct of the enemy should compel him to resort to it.

One of the most spirited enterprises of the year was that of Lieutenant Medcalf and a few men of the Norfolk, Middle-

sex and Kent militia in capturing a party of the enemy's regulars near Chatham in the latter part of December. The Americans, forty-five in number, were posted in the house of one Macrae, by the riverside, when Medcalf with twenty-eight of his militia surprised them, killed two of the party and made all the rest, except three who escaped, prisoners. This party, which was from the garrison at Detroit, had been committing many depredations on the peninsula, and their capture was a great relief to the settlers on the river Thames.

When the general results of the land operations of the year 1813 are considered, it will be seen that the balance of advantage was greatly with the British, notwithstanding Procter's defeat on the Thames, the repulse at Sacketts Harbour and the capture of York and Fort George. Although the Americans had strained their resources to the utmost and collected an army of more than fourteen thousand men for the capture of Montreal, they were foiled and defeated by a comparatively small British force. Their brief occupation of the western peninsula brought them no substantial advantage, and on the Niagara frontier their strength gradually withered away, until, so far from being able to hold Canadian territory, they had no longer the power to defend their own. The year closed with Fort Niagara in possession of the British forces and the state of New York open to their attack. The American militia had become so demoralized that they were no longer able to make even a pretence of resistance, and after nearly two years of warfare the conquest of Canada seemed to be more remote than ever.

While the land operations detailed in the foregoing chapters were in progress, the whole coast of the United States was blockaded by British vessels so that the commerce of the country was almost ruined. The officer commanding on the North American station was Rear-Admiral Cockburn, who by the efficient manner in which he attended to his instructions has earned the violent hatred and abuse of most American writers on the war. On March 4th, 1813,

Cockburn in the *Marlborough*, 74, and with a number of frigates and smaller vessels, entered Chesapeake Bay. He was charged with the duty of threatening and harassing the enemy so that they would be obliged to gather troops for the defence of Washington, which would leave them fewer to use for an attack on Canada. Later in the same month, Admiral Warren himself came with a reinforcement. The operations of the British fleet in Chesapeake Bay during that summer, although they were effective, do not properly come under the scope of this history. The Americans were kept in a constant state of alarm, much public property was destroyed, and the militia, who were frequently attacked on shore, as regularly ran away. A great many slaves sought refuge on board the British vessels from the tyranny of their masters, begging that they might have the benefit of that beneficent principle of law which declares that no slave can live on British ground. The prayers of these unfortunate victims of a detestable system were not denied, and they were received on board the British ships. There was no event of the war which struck such terror into the hearts of the slave-holders of Virginia and the other states of the South as this. To counteract the movement, they spread the report that the British were taking these slaves, who had fled to them, to the West Indies and were selling them there. Lossing adopts this story and enlarges upon it in the face of the fact that these slaves were taken to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and provided for by the British government, and that their descendants to the number of several thousands are living in these provinces to this day.

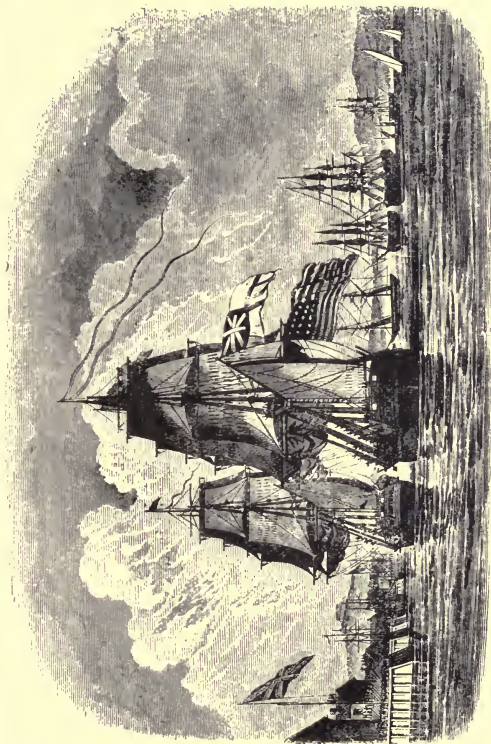
Only four single-ship engagements took place during the year 1813, in two of which the British were successful. The most important of these which was between the British frigate *Shannon*, Captain Broke, and the United States frigate *Chesapeake*, Captain Lawrence, took place six leagues east of Boston light on June 1st, 1813, at 5.40 p.m., the *Chesapeake* having left Boston the same day at noon to engage the *Shannon*. In the other frigate actions in which the Ameri-

cans had been victorious they had an immense superiority, but here the combatants were more evenly matched. The *Chesapeake* carried fifty guns, twenty-six in broadside, twenty-eight long 18's on the gun-deck, on the spar-deck two long 12's, one long 18, eighteen 32-pounder carronades and one 12-pounder carronade. The *Shannon* carried fifty-two guns, thirty-six in broadside, viz., twenty-eight long 18's on the gun-deck, and on the spar-deck four long 9's, one long 6, sixteen 32-pounder carronades and three 12-pounder carronades. The respective forces of the ships may be seen by the following table:—

| | Guns in Broadside. | Weight of Broadside. | Number of Men. |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Chesapeake</i> | 26 | 582 | 379 |
| <i>Shannon</i> | 26 | 544 | 330 |

The American vessel was thus superior both in weight of metal and number of men, yet she was captured by boarding after an engagement which lasted just fifteen minutes. The *Chesapeake* had sixty-one killed or mortally wounded, including Captain Lawrence and Lieutenant Ludlow, and eighty-five severely and slightly wounded. The *Shannon* had thirty-three killed and fifty wounded, Captain Broke being among the latter. The *Chesapeake* was taken into Halifax, and the large fleet of pleasure boats and yachts which had attended her down the bay to see how readily she would "whip the Britisher," had to return grievously disappointed.

Captain Lawrence, who fell in the engagement, had been the commander of the American corvette *Hornet*, which on the twenty-fourth of February previous, captured and sank the British brig *Peacock* off the Demarara River. The *Hornet* carried eighteen 32-pounder carronades and two long 12's, so that she threw a broadside of three hundred pounds. Her crew numbered one hundred and forty-two men. The *Peacock* carried sixteen 24-pounder carronades, two long 9's, one 12-pounder and one 6-pounder carronade. Her broadside weight of metal was two hundred and ten pounds, and her



THE *Shannon* TAKING THE CAPTURED *Chesapeake* INTO HALIFAX HARBOUR

From an old print.

crew numbered one hundred and twenty-two men. With such odds against her the defeat of the *Peacock* is easily accounted for, although it was made worse than it need have been by the bad gunnery of her men, who instead of being drilled at the cannon were kept most of the time polishing brass-work in order that the vessel might retain the title of "The Yacht." Her foolish martinet of a captain, William Peake, was killed in the action with seven of his men, and twenty-eight were wounded. The *Hornet* lost only one killed and two wounded. The *Peacock* sank almost immediately after her surrender, taking down with her nine of her own men and three of the *Hornet's* crew.

On the fourteenth of August, the American brig *Argus*, which had been committing depredations in St. George's Channel, was encountered and captured by the British brig *Pelican*, Captain Maples. The *Argus* carried eighteen 24-pounder carronades and two long 12's, and her crew numbered one hundred and twenty-one men. The *Pelican* carried sixteen 32-pounder carronades, two long 12's and two long 6's as stern-chasers. Her crew numbered one hundred and sixteen men. The action lasted forty-five minutes, the American brig hauling down her colours as the *Pelican's* men were in the act of boarding. The British vessel had but two men killed and five wounded, the *Argus* had ten killed and fourteen wounded, her commander, Lieutenant William Henry Allen, being among the slain.

The last single-ship engagement of the year was between the British brig *Boxer*, Captain Blyth, and the American brig *Enterprise*, which was commanded by Lieutenant William Burrows, and resulted in the capture of the former. The *Enterprise* carried fourteen 18-pounder carronades and two long 9's, and her crew numbered one hundred and two men. The *Boxer* carried twelve 18-pounder carronades and two long 6's, and her crew numbered but sixty-six men. The *Boxer* was desperately defended and was not surrendered until she was almost a wreck and three of her guns dismounted. Three of her men were killed and seventeen

wounded, four of them mortally. Among the slain were Captain Blyth of the *Boxer*, and Lieutenant Burrows of the *Enterprise*, the two commanders were buried side by side at Portland, with the honours of war. Captain Blyth had nailed his colours to the mast and declared that the *Boxer* should never be surrendered while he lived, and he kept his word. This gallant officer was killed by an 18-pound shot at the very beginning of the action. No doubt his death contributed largely to the defeat of the *Boxer*, but in any case the odds were so greatly against her that success would have been difficult to achieve. No honour was lost to the British flag by the *Boxer's* defeat.

CHAPTER XV

WILKINSON'S DEFEAT AT LA COLLE

THE people of the United States were ill-satisfied with the results of their two years of warfare, and those of New England made no attempt to conceal their sentiments. Governor Strong, of Massachusetts, in his message denounced the war as cruel and unjust, and asked the legislature to adopt measures for bringing about a speedy peace. The two Houses agreed to a remonstrance in which they declared the further prosecution of the war to be impolitic and unjust, and implored Congress to adopt measures for arresting it. This remonstrance was presented in June, 1813, but no attention was paid to it, for the war party in Congress was strong and truculent and still hopeful of the conquest of Canada. The leaders of the peace party in New England were so impressed with the hopelessness of their position, that they suggested the propriety of the New England states taking care of themselves, and concluding a separate peace with Great Britain, leaving the states beyond the Hudson River to fight as long as they pleased. Even at this early period, the interests of New England and those of the slave-holding states of the South were in direct conflict with each other.

A conspicuous proof of the predominance of the South was afforded by the passage in December, 1813, of an Embargo Act, forbidding under heavy penalties the exportation by land or water of any goods, produce, specie or live stock. This Act was intended to prevent supplies reaching the British from American ports, but was so strictly enforced while it lasted, that it entirely stopped the local coasting trade and put the small towns on the New England coast

to great suffering and inconvenience. While the war party in Congress was exulting over this last exhibition of their power, news came from Europe which threw them into a great state of consternation. They learned that their good friend and ally, Napoleon, had been defeated at the battle of Leipsic, and that the French armies had been driven out of Spain by Wellington. Visions were before them of the forlorn condition to which they would be reduced when the British had the war with Napoleon off their hands and would be able to turn their attention exclusively to them.

In March, 1813, the emperor of Russia, through M. Daschkoff, his representative at Washington, formally offered the United States his friendly services in bringing about a peace with Great Britain. This offer, which came at a time when the disasters which Napoleon had met with in Russia seemed to point to his speedy downfall, was accepted, and Albert Gallatin, the secretary of the treasury, and James A. Bayard, senator for Delaware, were appointed envoys extraordinary to act jointly with Mr. Adams and negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain at St. Petersburg. The British government refused to treat under the mediation of Russia, but offered to open negotiations in London or at Gottenburg in Sweden, "upon principles of perfect reciprocity, not inconsistent with the established maxims of public law, and with the maritime rights of the British empire." Although it was evident from this offer, which was received early in January, 1814, that Great Britain did not intend to recede from her position as to the right of search, President Madison was so terrified at the prospect of having to conduct the war without French aid that he appointed Henry Clay and Jonathan Russell as additional commissioners, and the five by the concurrent action of the Senate were duly commissioned to treat for peace with the British representatives at Gottenburg. Clay and Russell sailed from New York on February 23rd, 1814, carrying with them instructions to insist that the British should abandon the right of search, and cease to impress seamen on board American vessels. "Our flag,"

said the instructions, "must protect the crew, or the United States cannot consider themselves an independent nation." These instructions were wholly disregarded in the peace which was eventually concluded. The negotiations for peace thus commenced gave the peace party a lever with which to effect the removal of the obstructive Embargo Act, and it was repealed on April 14th, 1814, after it had been in operation less than three months and a half.

Not only had the continuance of the war pressed with great severity upon the commercial interests of the United States, it had also greatly embarrassed the government financially. Notwithstanding the enthusiasm with which the American people had entered upon the contest, it was found extremely difficult to obtain recruits for the regular army. This army was intended to have a strength of sixty-one thousand men, but at the beginning of the year 1814 its number did not exceed forty thousand. To bring the force up to the required strength great inducements to recruits were authorized by Congress. Men willing to enlist were to receive a bounty of one hundred and twenty-four dollars, their pay was increased and each private was to have a grant of one hundred and sixty acres of land in Illinois or Missouri. At the same time the president was authorized to call out the militia for six months instead of three.

It has been already stated that when the war commenced there were but eight British regiments in Canada, including the 10th Veteran Battalion and the three provincial corps, the Canadian Fencibles, the Glengarries, and the Newfoundland Regiment. The whole force, including a detachment of artillery, numbered but four thousand four hundred and fifty rank and file. At the beginning of 1814 the number of regiments in Canada had been increased to fifteen, viz., the 1st, 8th, 13th, 41st, 49th, 89th, 100th, 103rd, 104th, Glengarries, Canadian Fencibles, *Voltigeurs*, Newfoundland Regiment, De Watteville's and De Meuron's Regiments. The two latter were foreign corps, and the five preceding them provincial regiments. The 41st had two battalions, but the greater

part of the first battalion had been captured after the battle of the Thames. The regular force in Canada was, therefore, considerably less than ten thousand rank and file. The strength of the six battalions of the embodied militia of Lower Canada was at this time a little less than four thousand, that of Upper Canada was of course much less. These figures will serve to show what a strain was put upon the zeal and courage of the sedentary militia of both provinces, but especially of Upper Canada, in the year 1814.

In February, a welcome reinforcement came from New Brunswick in the second battalion of the 8th Regiment, which had been stationed in that province after the 104th left there. As soon as their own regiment was summoned to the front, the people of New Brunswick with that loyalty and zeal which have ever distinguished them, organized another regiment, "The New Brunswick Fencibles," of which Lieutenant-General John Coffin, a resident of the province, became colonel. The formation of this corps relieved the second battalion of the 8th from garrison duty in New Brunswick, and made it available for service in Canada. They reached Quebec by the same overland route through the wilderness, which the 104th had traversed the year previous, and were followed by two hundred and twenty seamen for the lakes. To expedite the progress of these reinforcements the legislature of New Brunswick voted £300, and the city of St. John gave an equal sum to defray the expense of conveying them in sleighs as far as the nature of the roads would permit. Private individuals showed as great a public spirit in giving the use of their teams for the transport of the gallant soldiers and sailors. At that period, although the British North American provinces were widely separated by natural obstacles, they were closely united in spirit and patriotism. Politically they are now one, and three independent lines of railway now render communication between New Brunswick and Quebec easy and rapid at all seasons, so that it takes fewer hours to accomplish the distance than it did days ninety years ago.

The complete collapse of the American power on the Niagara frontier enabled Lieutenant-General Drummond to extend his protection to those portions of the peninsula which were much exposed to the raids of the enemy. In February, Captain A. H. Holmes, of the 24th United States infantry, was sent by Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, who was in temporary command at Detroit, to capture Fort Talbot on Lake Erie, where a British detachment was stationed. Holmes had with him one hundred and sixty men, rangers and mounted infantry of the 24th and 28th Regiments, and two 6-pounders. He was foiled in his attempt on Fort Talbot, and was retreating by way of Longwood, when Captain Basden, of the 89th, advanced against him from Delaware Town, with the two flank companies of the 1st Royal Scots, the light company of the 89th, and fifty militia rangers and Kent militia, in all one hundred and ninety-six rank and file, and fifty Indians under Colonel Elliott. Holmes, learning of the approach of the British, fell back five miles to Twenty Mile Creek, where he secured himself on a commanding eminence beyond a wide and deep ravine behind log intrenchments forming a hollow square. There on the fourth of March, Captain Basden found and attacked the Americans in their stronghold. The snow was about fifteen inches deep with a strong crust rendering the approach to the enemy very difficult. Some of the militia who were well acquainted with the country offered to lead Captain Basden by a circuitous route to the rear of their position by which the Americans would have been caught in a *cul de sac* and forced to surrender. Captain Basden, however, preferred a direct attack, and assailed the enemy in front with his three companies of regulars while the militia made a flank movement to the right and the Indians a similar movement to the left. The British rushed across the ravine and up the height, but were received by such a heavy fire from the Americans, who were almost completely sheltered, that after a long and gallant struggle they were forced to retire with a loss of fourteen killed and fifty-one wounded. The Americans were so completely shel-

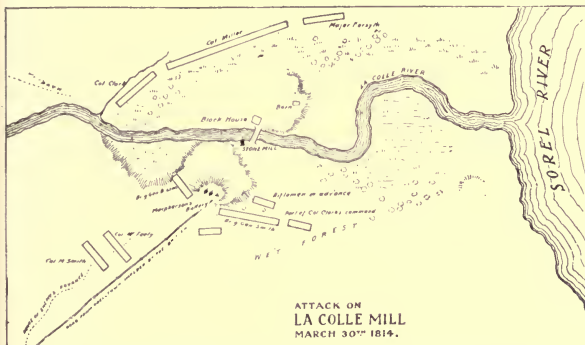
tered that their loss was but four killed and four wounded. Captain Basden's excuse for his refusal to adopt a plan of attack which would have ensured success and saved many valuable lives, was that he wished to show a good example to the militia, but, as the citizen soldiers of Canada had never displayed any lack of courage, no such example seems to have been necessary. Captain Basden, no doubt, was a brave officer, but he showed a lamentable lack of common sense in his method of attack, and exhibited his utter unfitness for a separate command.

The first serious operation undertaken by the Americans in 1814 was in Lower Canada. Secretary Armstrong, indeed, had views of his own, which, if carried out, would have made the Niagara frontier the first point of attack, and, in a letter written to General Wilkinson on the twentieth of January, he proposed that Colonel Winfield Scott should have two thousand four hundred men placed under him with which to recapture Fort Niagara where the British maintained a garrison of less than three hundred men. This plan miscarried owing to the opposition of General Wilkinson, who was ambitious to distinguish himself on the northern frontier and wipe away part of the disgrace of the failure of the previous autumn. After the abandonment of the expedition against Montreal in November, 1813, Wilkinson's force was established in winter quarters on the Salmon River, near French Mills, but in January orders were received from the war department to break up this post. Early in February these orders were executed and General Wilkinson burnt his three hundred boats and *bateaux*, which had been used for the carriage of his troops, twelve gunboats which had been employed to protect his flotilla, and the barracks, blockhouses and huts for his troops which had been built at great labour and cost. All this property having been committed to the flames, the American general despatched General Brown with two thousand men, besides artillery, to Sacketts Harbour, and with the remainder of his force and as much of his stores and baggage as he could carry with him retreated to Platts-

burg. Colonel Scott of the 103rd Regiment with detachments from that corps, the 89th, the Canadian Fencibles and a few light cavalry, the whole force amounting to about one thousand one hundred rank and file, pressed on Wilkinson's rear as he retreated, and captured about one hundred sleigh loads of stores and provisions. Scott returned to his post at Côteau du Lac after having advanced to within a few miles of Plattsburg without encountering any opposition whatever.

General Wilkinson had not been long at Plattsburg before he began to grow impatient to be in the field once more. He had become impressed with the idea that the British meditated some serious movement against him, and he determined to anticipate it. On the nineteenth of March he advanced with his army from Plattsburg to Chazy which is on the road from Plattsburg to Champlain, and there detached Brigadier-General Macomb with a corps of riflemen and a brigade of infantry across the lake to St. Armands where they remained until the twenty-sixth, when they were suddenly withdrawn and rejoined the main body of the army at Champlain. On the twenty-ninth General Wilkinson called a council of war at that place, which was attended by Brigadier-Generals Macomb, Bissel and Smyth, Colonels Atkinson, Miller and Cummings, and Majors Pitt and Totten. At this council the American general stated that the British had two thousand five hundred regulars at Isle Aux Noix and La Colle Mill, of whom, after leaving a garrison of two hundred men at Isle Aux Noix, two thousand three hundred might be brought into action. Wilkinson stated his own force at four thousand combatants, including one hundred cavalry and three hundred artillery with eleven guns, and he propounded the question, "Shall we attack the enemy?" The council expressed the opinion that the light troops should cover a reconnaissance towards La Colle Mill, and, if found practicable, the position should be attacked and the British works destroyed, and that the whole army should move to support the light troops. The council also approved the

order of battle which the general had submitted to them. On the same day Wilkinson issued a general order directing the men to be supplied with sixty rounds of ammunition and four days' cooked provisions. He said to his soldiers: "Let every officer and every man make the resolution to return victorious or not at all; for, with double the force of the enemy, this army must not give ground." The troops in approaching the enemy were ordered to be profoundly silent, and by way of screwing their courage to the sticking-point the following interesting information was communicated to them: "An officer will be posted on the right of each platoon, and a tried sergeant will form a supernumerary rank, and will instantly put to death any man who goes back."



MAP OF THE ATTACK ON LA COLLE MILL, MARCH 30TH, 1814

On the thirtieth of March General Wilkinson, with his four thousand men divided into three brigades, commenced his march to La Colle, which is distant about seven miles from his camp at Champlain. The American general had been misinformed as to the strength of the British and consequently his army was out of all proportion to the force to be encountered. Instead of there being two thousand five hun-

dred men at Isle Aux Noix and La Colle Mill, there were less than seven hundred and fifty troops between both places, and not more than one thousand five hundred, including five hundred militia, within twenty-five miles of La Colle. The mill at La Colle was a stone structure, fifty feet in length and thirty-six in width with walls eighteen inches in thickness. To make it capable of defence the windows had been filled up with logs, leaving horizontal loopholes for muskets. It stood on the south side of the La Colle River about three-quarters of a mile above its junction with the Richelieu. The river at this point was crossed by a wooden bridge which formed a means of communication with a small wooden blockhouse which stood on the north bank of the river, and to the north of this blockhouse was an ordinary wooden barn. The clearing extended about one hundred yards to the north of the blockhouse and about two hundred yards to the south of the mill; beyond these points was a thick woods which on both sides approached quite close to the mill and blockhouse. The mill was occupied by a garrison of one hundred and eighty men under the command of Major Hancock of the 13th. It consisted of Captain Blake's company of that regiment, a small detachment of Frontier Light Infantry under Captain Ritter, seventy marines and four marine artillerymen.

General Wilkinson's army commenced its march at ten o'clock, but did not arrive in front of the mill until two o'clock in the afternoon. The advance had been delayed by the road, which was covered with melting snow, and also obstructed for some distance by trees which had been felled across it. In its march, General Bissel's brigade encountered a British picket and lost thirteen men, killed and wounded, by its fire. This incident showed the Americans that Major Hancock had received notice of their approach. He had been early informed of their advance against him, and had sent to Isle Aux Noix for reinforcements, which, however, did not arrive until the action had commenced.

When General Wilkinson's army reached the mill, the very

elaborate plan of operations which he had formed for its investment and capture, was fully developed. Colonel Clark and Major Forsyth, who commanded the advance, were sent across the La Colle to the rear of the blockhouse, and were immediately followed by Colonel Miller with his regiment of six hundred men. The duty of this detachment was to cut off the British garrison in case it attempted to retreat, and to prevent the arrival of any reinforcements. The remainder of Wilkinson's force was drawn up in front of the mill, Captain McPherson with his artillery being covered by the brigades of Generals Smyth and Bissel. General Macomb commanded the reserves.

Macomb endeavoured to place an 18-pounder in a favourable position to breach the walls, but the carriage broke and it could not be sent forward. McPherson's guns, a 12 and a 6-pounder, and a 5½-inch howitzer were then brought to the front, and placed in a good position in the woods about two hundred and fifty yards from the mill. They opened fire upon it briskly but produced no impression upon its thick and honestly built walls. The garrison of the mill responded with an equally vigorous fire of musketry. Soon after this cannonade commenced the two flank companies of the 13th Regiment, under Captains Ellard and Holgate, arrived from Isle Aux Noix, and occupied the blockhouse on the north side of La Colle. Major Handcock, who from the nature of the ground they occupied was unaware of the strength of the enemy, at once ordered these two companies to charge the guns. This they did with the utmost intrepidity, but a charge executed by hardly more than one hundred men against a numerous force of artillery supported by two brigades of infantry, could not be successful. Captain Ellard was severely wounded and his two companies had to retire to the blockhouse. At this moment the grenadier company of the Canadian Fencibles under Captain Cartwright, and a company of *voltigeurs* arrived from Burtonville, and a second charge was ordered which was headed by Captain Blake of the 13th Regiment. The four companies advanced against

the guns with such resolution that the artillerymen deserted them, and they were only saved from capture by the powerful force of infantry behind them. This fact was attested to both by General Bissel and Lieutenant-Colonel Totten of the American engineers, at General Wilkinson's court-martial; and Captain McPherson, who commanded the American artillery, gave equally strong testimony. "The conduct of the enemy that day," said he, "was distinguished by desperate bravery. As an instance, one company made a charge on our artillery, and, at the same instant, received its fire and that of two brigades of infantry."

Major Handcock soon perceived that the enemy was too powerful to be driven away, and ordered the four companies engaged in the sortie to retire to the blockhouse. The Americans continued to batter the mill with their artillery until nearly dark, without in any degree impairing its defensive strength, and finally, about six o'clock, they retired from the field and retreated by the same road by which they had advanced. They had lost thirteen killed, one hundred and twenty-eight wounded and thirteen missing, a total of one hundred and fifty-four. The British lost eleven killed, forty-four wounded and four missing. The whole British force engaged that day did not exceed four hundred men, and the defence of the post at La Colle was one of the most gallant affairs of the war. The American general certainly showed an incredible amount of stupidity in not ordering the occupation of the wooden blockhouse, which was without defenders when he advanced, and his officers on the north side of the river displayed great negligence in permitting the reinforcements from Isle Aux Noix and Burtonville to elude them and occupy the blockhouse. In the course of the contest, Captain Pring brought up his sloop and gunboats from Isle Aux Noix, and moored them at the entrance of the La Colle River, but the fire from his guns did the enemy no harm as they were protected by the thick woods. Major Handcock very prudently did not pursue Wilkinson's retreating forces, but they were followed for some distance by a small

party of Indians who had one of their number killed and one wounded. During the night, by the active exertions of Lieutenants Caswick and Hicks of the Royal Navy, two 18-pounder carronades were brought up from the vessels to the blockhouse, but they were not needed, for the enemy had disappeared. Wilkinson retreated to Plattsburg, and the La Colle episode closed his military career, for a few days later he was relieved of his command by an order from the war department. He was afterwards tried by court-martial, but as he proved that he had acted throughout under the instructions of Secretary Armstrong, he was acquitted. On the retirement of Wilkinson, General Brown became commander-in-chief in the northern department.

General Brown had arrived at Sacketts Harbour with his two thousand men from French Mills on the twenty-fourth of February, and a few days later received a despatch from Secretary Armstrong in the following terms: "You will immediately consult with Commodore Chauncey about the readiness of the fleet for a descent on Kingston the moment the ice leaves the lake. If he deems it practicable and you think you have troops enough to carry it, you will attempt the expedition. In such an event you will use the enclosed as a *ruse de guerre*." The enclosure thus referred to was in the following terms: "Public sentiment will no longer tolerate the possession of Fort Niagara by the enemy. You will therefore move the division which you brought from French Mills and invest that post. General Tompkins will coöperate with you with five hundred militia, and Colonel Scott, who is to be made a brigadier, will join you. You will receive your instructions at Onondago Hollow." General Brown had for several years been a schoolmaster, but he seemed to have forgotten his French, for he did not know the meaning of *ruse de guerre*; neither did Chauncey. At all events, both of these capable commanders wholly misunderstood the secretary's intentions, and Brown set out for the Niagara frontier. His force consisted of the 9th, 11th, 21st, and 25th Regiments of infantry, the 3rd Regiment of artillery

and Captain Towson's company of the 2nd Regiment of artillery, in all more than two thousand men. When Brown arrived at Onondago Hollow, there were no instructions at that place for him, and General Gaines, with the help of a French dictionary, succeeded in convincing the American commander that he had made a mistake, and that Kingston was the place he had been ordered to attack. Brown accordingly retraced his steps to Sacketts Harbour. There, Chauncey, who did not desire any nearer view of Kingston than could be had from a spyglass, made Brown believe that the first interpretation of the secretary's orders was the correct one, and that officer again marched westwards with his army. These pendulum-like movements necessarily took a good deal of time, and it was the end of March before Brown reached Batavia. Here he remained about a month, and then moved towards Buffalo. In the meantime he had heard from the secretary and been told that he had misunderstood his orders. The secretary, however, does not appear to have been much worried at the failure of his own plans against Kingston, for he wrote Brown: "If you left the harbour with a competent force for its defence, go on and prosper. Good consequences are sometimes the result of mistakes."

Whether Brown had left a competent force at Sacketts Harbour for its defence was not tested, for the British made no attack upon it. Yet the capture of the place at that time would have rendered the Americans utterly powerless in the next campaign and would have altogether changed the aspect of the contest, for their entire fleet was at Sacketts Harbour. Chauncey was nervously apprehensive that the post would be attacked, and had three thousand men quietly collected and marched against it, its capture would have been certain. But Sir George Prevost had no heart for such daring enterprises, and so that American dépôt on Lake Ontario was left unmolested.

Sir James Yeo displayed a great deal of energy during the winter in strengthening his fleet. On the fourteenth of April two new frigates, the *Prince Regent*, 58, and the *Princess*

Charlotte, 42, were launched at Kingston, and their rigging and equipment were advanced so rapidly that they were ready for service on the third of May. The *Prince Regent*, the largest of these frigates, was a more heavily armed ship than the *Constitution*, while the *Princess Charlotte* was a more powerful vessel than the *Shannon*. Commodore Yeo's original six cruisers had all been re-named, some of them re-armed, and both the schooners changed into brigs. Besides the two large frigates already mentioned, his fleet consisted of the ships *Montreal*, 25, and *Niagara*, 22, and the brigs *Charwell*, 16, *Star*, 16, *Netley*, 16, and *Magnet*, 12. With such a force at his disposal, Sir James did not propose to remain idle, and on the very day his ships were ready for sea he set sail from Kingston for Oswego, which Sir George Prevost had reluctantly consented to permit him to attack on the urgent representation of Lieutenant-General Drummond and himself. Fortunately for the success of the expedition, the commander-in-chief did not think it necessary to accompany it in person.

Sir James Yeo, with his fleet, was off Oswego by noon on the fifth of May. General Drummond had command of the land forces, and the troops embarked with him consisted of six companies of De Watteville's Regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer; the light company of the Glengarry Light Infantry, under Captain McMillan; the second battalion of marines under Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm; a detachment of artillery with two fieldpieces, under Captain Cruttenden; a detachment of the rocket company, under Lieutenant Stevens, and a few sappers and miners, under Lieutenant Gosset of the engineers,—the whole numbering one thousand and eighty rank and file. Oswego was defended by a fortification called Fort Ontario, which stood in a commanding position on a bluff on the east side of the river, overlooking the lake. The fort, which was star-shaped, covered upwards of three acres of ground and mounted six guns, three long 24-pounders, a long 12 and two long 6's. The batteries had been recently repaired and picketed and new platforms laid for the guns.

The fort had a garrison consisting of Lieutenant-Colonel Mitchell's battalion of artillery, numbering upwards of three hundred rank and file, in addition to a number of artillery and engineer officers. In the river was the United States schooner *Growler*, having on board seven heavy guns and a large quantity of stores and ammunition intended for the fleet at Sacketts Harbour.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of the day of their arrival at Oswego, the ships lay to, within long gun-shot of the fort, and the gunboats, under Captain Collier, were sent close in for the purpose of inducing the enemy to show his fire and particularly the number and position of his guns. A mutual cannonade was kept up for an hour and a half, the Americans replying to the British fire with four cannon from the fort, and a long 12-pounder, which had been posted on the beach. The object of this reconnaissance having been fully accomplished, the gunboats withdrew, and arrangements were made for the attack which it was intended should be made at eight o'clock in the evening. But at sunset a very heavy squall came up from the north-west, which blew directly on the shore, and compelled the fleet to gain an offing. Four of the supply-boats had to be cast adrift; one of them went ashore, and this circumstance has enabled some American writers like Lossing to concoct a remarkable narrative describing the gallant fashion in which the British were driven back by the fire from the fort. That evening the British fleet disappeared from in front of Oswego, but Mitchell was under no delusion as to the cause of their departure, and, knowing that he might expect them back next day, he sent out messengers to bring in the militia, and ordered the commander of the *Growler* to sink that vessel and join him with his forty seamen at the fort. Two hundred of the militia of the county, burning with ardent patriotism, came into the fort in the course of a few hours, so that the American commander had about six hundred men at his disposal, two-thirds of them regulars.

On the morning of the sixth, Sir James Yeo's fleet was

again in front of Oswego, and preparations were at once made for an attack. The *Princess Charlotte*, *Montreal* and *Niagara* engaged the batteries as close to the shore as the depth of the water would permit them. The *Magnet* took a station in front of the town on the opposite side of the river, to keep in check any militia who might attempt to enter the fort from that quarter, while the *Charwell* and *Star* towed the boats with the troops, and then covered their landing by scouring the woods on the low point towards the foot of the hill to the eastward of the fort, by which it was intended to advance to the assault. The attacking party consisted of the two flank companies of De Watteville's regiment, under Captain De Bersey, the light company of the Glengarries, under Captain McMillan, these three companies numbering one hundred and forty rank and file; the battalion of marines, four hundred strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm; and two hundred seamen armed with pikes, under Captain Mulcaster. The whole force, numbering about seven hundred and forty rank and file, was under the immediate command of Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer of De Watteville's regiment, but both Lieutenant-General Drummond and Sir James Yeo went ashore with the troops.

The *Princess Charlotte* drew too much water to get within effective range of the batteries, but the *Montreal* and *Niagara* took stations within a quarter of a mile of the fort and gallantly performed the service assigned to them, although assailed with heavy discharges of red-hot shot which set the *Montreal* on fire three times, and cut her up greatly in her hull, masts and rigging. The troops landed in excellent order under a heavy fire from the fort, as well as from a considerable body of the enemy drawn up on the brow of the hill and in the woods. They then formed on the beach, and while the company of Glengarry Light Infantry cleared the woods on the left and drove the enemy into the fort, the marines and sailors and the two flank companies of De Watteville's Regiment charged gallantly up the hill and carried the fort after a very brief struggle. The brave militia took to

their heels the moment the terrible men of Glengarry made their appearance in the woods, and the American regulars were driven out of the fort within ten minutes of the appearance of the British on the height on which it stood. Lieutenant-Colonel Mitchell retreated, with what remained of his force, to the falls of the Oswego, twelve miles from the lake. The American loss was stated in their official returns at six killed, thirty-eight wounded and twenty-five missing. The British took sixty prisoners, more than half of whom were wounded.

The loss of the British in this spirited affair was twenty-two killed, and seventy-three wounded. Among the killed was Captain Holloway, of the marines, and among the wounded the gallant Captain Mulcaster, who fell while bravely leading his sailors against the battery. Lieutenant Laurie, of the marines, was the first man to scale the ramparts and enter the fort, and Lieutenant Hewett of the same corps, climbed the flagstaff under a heavy fire, and in the most daring style struck the American colours which had been nailed to the mast.

The capture of Oswego was deemed important because the place was a *dépôt* of stores passing from New York to Sacketts Harbour. A large part of these stores had been removed to the falls previous to the attack, but a very considerable quantity still remained. The British captured thirteen cannon, destroying the six they took in the fort, but carried away the three long 32-pounders and four long 24-pounders sunk in the *Growler*. They also carried off a large supply of shot of various calibres and of ammunition, eight hundred barrels of flour, five hundred barrels of bread, five hundred barrels of pork, six hundred barrels of salt and a large quantity of rope and cordage. They raised the *Growler* and took her away, besides another schooner and several boats and smaller craft, and they destroyed the barracks and all other public buildings. The Americans professed to regard the capture of Oswego as of little moment because they did not lose all the stores that had been there,

but the material loss was certainly large and the affair was a most humiliating blow to their prestige.

Sir James Yeo returned to Kingston with the spoils of Oswego, and having landed the troops appeared on the nineteenth of May off Sacketts Harbour, and began a strict blockade of that place. This made the bringing of the equipment of the new American warships from Oswego Falls to Sacketts Harbour a task of enormous difficulty and greatly retarded their completion. Captain Wolsey, of the United States navy, undertook to convey the heavy guns and cables of the *Superior* from the falls to Stoney Creek, three miles from Sacketts Harbour, to which they could be carried by land. On the evening of the twenty-eighth of May, Wolsey, with nineteen boats heavily laden with twenty-two long 32-pounders, ten 24's, three 42-pounder carronades and twelve cables, left Oswego for Stoney Creek. The flotilla was protected by Major Appling with one hundred and thirty riflemen. An equal number of Oneida Indians were engaged to meet the boats at the mouth of Big Salmon River and to assist in case of an attack.

Wolsey found that he could not elude the blockading squadron and reach Stoney Creek, so he resolved to run up Big Sandy Creek and land his cargo there. All got in safely except one boat, laden with two long 24's and a cable, which fell into the hands of the British. Sir James Yeo at once sent Captains Popham and Spilsbury to attempt the capture of the other boats. These officers had with them two gunboats and five barges manned by one hundred and seventy-five sailors and marines. They learned that the flotilla had got into Big Sandy Creek, and resolved to pursue it up that stream.

The Big Sandy is a narrow stream which flows through a level tract which was then covered with trees and bushes. On the morning of the thirtieth the British boats and barges entered the creek and advanced up it almost to the point where the flotilla lay. The British marines were landed on the left bank and a party of seamen on the right, to clear the

bushes of any enemies. Wolsey, however, had not only been joined by the Indians, but had been reinforced from the harbour by a company of light artillery with two 6-pounders, a squadron of cavalry and about three hundred infantry. Appling and his riflemen and the Indians were ambushed about half a mile below the American boats, and poured a deadly volley into the British as they passed. The too adventurous parties of seamen and marines were fairly caught in a trap, and, surrounded as they were by a more than threefold force of enemies with every advantage of position, they were forced to surrender after losing eighteen killed and fifty dangerously wounded. It was certainly an enormous piece of folly to attack an enemy in so strong a position with such an inadequate force, but at all events, no honour was lost by the British in the affair. It was a disaster entirely due to over-confidence and rashness, and a neglect of those ordinary precautions which are seldom disregarded in military matters without the want of forethought bringing its own punishment.

CHAPTER XVI

CHIPPAWA AND LUNDY'S LANE

WE now approach the most important campaign of the whole war, the one garnished with the names of Chippawa, Lundy's Lane and Fort Erie; a campaign which every loyal Canadian can regard with feelings of pride. The new American commander-in-chief had resolved to make one more supreme effort to win the Niagara frontier, and he did not doubt his ability to march down the north side of Lake Ontario and capture Kingston, provided the fleet would coöperate with him. In justice to General Brown, it must be admitted that he adopted the only method by which success was possible, and was unwearied in his efforts to drill and discipline his army. The months that had elapsed between the close of the last campaign in Lower Canada and the summer of 1814, were spent in constant exercises. The troops were drilled from seven to ten hours a day, and, as most of them had been two years in active service, Brown's army had acquired a mobility and efficiency which no American force that had appeared in the field during the war possessed. But this circumstance, while it accounts for the obstinacy with which the battles of this campaign were contested, only makes the triumph of the British regulars and Canadian militia over Brown's force more glorious.

General Brown was at Buffalo, when on the first of July he received orders from Secretary Armstrong to cross the Niagara River, carry Fort Erie and beat up "the enemy's quarters at Chippawa," and if assured of the coöperation of the fleet, to seize and fortify Burlington Heights. The coöperation of the fleet was considered essential to any permanent lodgment at the head of Lake Ontario, for without it, so long

as the British held Fort Niagara and Fort George, the American line of communication would be liable to be cut at any time if they advanced into the interior of Upper Canada. But this coöperation was not at this time possible, for Chauncey had not yet got out of Sacketts Harbour with his new and powerful ships. Indeed, the American commodore was not on the lake until the thirty-first of July, and by that time the opportunity had passed, for Brown's army had been defeated and the survivors of it were fugitives seeking protection behind the bastions of Fort Erie.

On the second of July, Brown issued his orders for crossing the river before daylight the following morning. His army consisted of two brigades of regular infantry, numbering, according to American accounts, two thousand six hundred rank and file, commanded by Generals Scott and Ripley. To each brigade was attached an efficient train of artillery, commanded by Major Hindman and Captain Towson. There was also a squadron of dragoons commanded by Captain Harris. These were all regulars, and their strength may be placed at three thousand one hundred rank and file. There was also a third brigade under General Porter composed of six hundred New York volunteers, five hundred Pennsylvania volunteers and six hundred Indian warriors. One hundred of the New York volunteers were mounted. Brown's force immediately available for the invasion of Canada was therefore four thousand eight hundred men. Besides these he had at different posts between Erie and Lewiston the 1st Regiment of United States infantry, a regular rifle corps, one hundred and fifty Canadian refugee volunteers, and three hundred New York volunteers under Colonel Philetus Swift. These additions would bring Brown's strength up to fully six thousand men, independent of the militia of the state. All these figures are from American authorities, but there is good reason to believe that they are much too low, for on the same authority we are told that Colonel Miller's regiment, the 21st, mustered six hundred rank and file on the thirtieth of March, at La Colle Mill. Yet Miller's regiment was only

one of the four that composed Ripley's brigade, the strength of which, on the first of July, is stated at one thousand three hundred men. It would be singular, indeed, if the average strength of the four regiments of Ripley's brigade was only three hundred and twenty-five, and still more singular that one regiment should number six hundred men, and the other three average only one hundred and seventy-five men each, at the very beginning of the campaign.

The British force on the Niagara frontier, including the garrisons of Fort Erie, Fort George, Fort Niagara, Mississagua and the post at Burlington Heights, did not exceed one thousand eight hundred men. It was under the command of Major-General Riall, who is described by an officer who served under him at this time, as a gallant man, but possessed of very little military skill, who had attained his rank by the purchase of all purchasable grades. This criticism seems to be amply justified by the fact that Riall left a garrison of one hundred and seventy men of the 8th and 100th Regiments without proper defensive works in Fort Erie, where they were certain to be captured if the enemy advanced in force. On the morning of the third of July, General Scott's brigade crossed the Niagara River, and landed below Fort Erie unmolested. General Ripley soon afterwards landed with his brigade above the fort, which was immediately invested and summoned to surrender. After the exchange of a few cannon shots, by which one British soldier was killed and seven Amerians killed and wounded, Major Buck surrendered Fort Erie, and he and his men became prisoners of war. The place, no doubt, was incapable of successful defence, but had it been otherwise and Buck in a position to maintain himself for a few days, General Brown might have had reason to regret his rashness in crossing the Niagara River as he did with an uncaptured fort in front of him and an enterprising enemy on his flank. As it was, Fort Erie was taken without any serious resistance, and the Americans became possessed of a place of retreat to which they could fly in the event of any great disaster to their army.

The nearest British force to Fort Erie at this time was at Chippawa, where there were less than eight hundred regulars and about three hundred sedentary militia. General Riall, who received the news of the American invasion about eight o'clock on the same morning, immediately ordered five companies of the Royal Scots to Chippawa under Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon to reinforce the garrison of that place, and sent out Lieutenant-Colonel Pearson of the 100th Regiment with the flank companies of that corps, some militia of the 2nd Lincoln Regiment and a few Indians to reconnoitre the enemy's position and ascertain his numbers. The Americans were seen to be posted on the ridge parallel to the river near the ferry opposite Black Rock and in strong force. As the 8th Regiment, which was hourly expected from York, had not arrived, General Riall did not deem it prudent to make an attack that day. On the following morning General Scott advanced towards Chippawa with his brigade, which consisted of the 9th, 11th, 22nd and 25th Regiments of infantry accompanied by Towson's artillery corps. He was followed later by Ripley's brigade, composed of the 17th, 19th, 21st and 23rd Regiments of infantry with Hindman's artillery, and by Porter's brigade of volunteers. Scott's brigade encountered the British advance consisting of the light companies of the Royal Scots and 100th Regiment and a few of the 19th Dragoons, under Lieutenant-Colonel Pearson. There was some slight skirmishing, as the light companies retired, by the dragoons, in which the latter had four men wounded. The bridge over Street's Creek was destroyed by Pearson's men, his little detachment being at that moment threatened by a flank attack from a body of artillery and infantry which had crossed the creek at a point some distance above the bridge. The bridge was repaired by the American pioneers and their army crossed over while Pearson and his men retired beyond the Chippawa. The Americans encamped that night on the south bank of the creek close to the Niagara River. The British camp was north of the Chippawa River.

Between Street's Creek and the Chippawa River is a tract



TROOPER OF THE 19TH LIGHT DRAGOONS

Two squadrons of this Regiment took part in the Campaigns of 1813-14, on the Niagara Frontier.

of level land a mile and a half in length and flanked on the east side by the Niagara River, along one side of which the road from Fort Erie to Queenston passes. This plain in 1814 was about half a mile in width, and was bounded on the west side by a forest. It was here on the fifth of July that the battle of Chippawa was fought.

General Riall had been joined that morning by the first battalion of the 8th Regiment, four hundred and eighty strong, and his force now consisted of that corps, five hundred of the Royal Scots, four hundred and fifty of the 100th Regiment, one troop numbering about seventy of the 19th Dragoons and thirty of the Royal Artillery with two light 24-pounders and a 5½-inch howitzer, in all one thousand five hundred and thirty rank and file of regulars. With these were three hundred militia, mostly of the 2nd Lincoln, under Lieutenant-Colonel Dixon and Major David Secord, and about three hundred Indians, or about two thousand one hundred and thirty rank and file in all. The American force at Street's Creek consisted of the infantry brigades of Scott and Ripley numbering two thousand six hundred, four hundred artillery with nine fieldpieces and howitzers, one hundred cavalry and six hundred New York volunteers, five hundred Pennsylvania volunteers and six hundred Indians under General Porter; or four thousand eight hundred men altogether.

General Riall, whose position on the Chippawa was strong and not easily turned, might have been readily excused, if, with his force so greatly inferior in numbers, he had remained on the defensive, but he was resolved to attack the enemy and made his dispositions accordingly. The British forces crossed the Chippawa and advanced to the attack about four o'clock in the afternoon. The position occupied by the American army had been well chosen for defence. Its right rested on some buildings and orchards close to the Niagara River, and was strongly supported by artillery, and its left on the woods which were occupied by Porter's brigade. The British advance consisted of three hundred Lincoln militia, the light companies of the Royal Scots, and of the 100th Regiment and

three hundred Indians. The latter, who were in front, in traversing the woods, for the most part, kept too far to the right, and only about eighty of them, under Captain Kerr, were brought into action. This small body of Indians encountered General Porter with three hundred Pennsylvania volunteers, six hundred Indians and eighty regulars, as he advanced through the woods on the left of the American line, and fell back on the militia. Lossing tells his readers: "The Indians, led by their war chief, were allowed to conduct their share of the battle as they pleased; and when the enemy had delivered his fire, they rushed forward with horrid yells, spreading consternation in the ranks of the foe, and making fearful havoc with the tomahawk and scalping knife." This is the same Lossing who states that the Indians were engaged to become allies of the Americans, "on the explicit understanding that they were not to kill the enemy who were wounded or taken prisoners, or to take scalps." He fairly gloats over the manner in which the American Indians plied the scalping knife. They fought "desperately hand to hand in many instances, and in every way won the applause of their commanding general." "But," he sadly adds, "the tide of fortune soon changed." It did indeed. Almost at the same moment that the Indians fell back on the militia, the two light companies joined the latter, and Porter's nine hundred volunteers and Indians and eighty regulars received such a deadly fire and were charged with such fury that they instantly broke and fled, and even Lossing has to admit that their retreat "became a tumultuous rout." The three hundred Pennsylvanians got out of the reach of danger with such alacrity that only three of them were killed and two wounded. They were pursued to Street's Creek, where their flight was checked by the advance of Ripley's brigade on the extreme left, and of the 25th Regiment under Major Jessop.

General Riall's main body advanced in three columns, the 8th Regiment being in front. Towson's artillery with four guns was posted on the American right and the four regiments of Scott's brigade, the 22nd, 9th, 11th and 25th were

stationed in the order given from right to left. To the left of Scott's brigade was the 19th Regiment of Ripley's brigade, and that general with his remaining three regiments was moving through the woods with a view to turning the British left. Such was the posture of affairs when Porter's brigade was broken and compelled to fly as already described. To the south of Street's Creek the batteries of Ritchie and Hindman were posted in a commanding position, while Biddle's battery was advanced on the left in the rear of Scott's brigade. Thus each of the enemy's nine fieldpieces was brought into a position where it could be most effective.

General Riall placed his two light 24-pounders and a 5½-inch howitzer against the right of the enemy's position and formed the Royal Scots and 100th Regiments with the intention of making a movement upon the American left. The 25th Regiment on Scott's extreme left deployed and opened a very heavy fire upon the British, upon which Riall immediately moved up the 8th Regiment to the right, while the Royal Scots and 100th Regiments were directed to charge the enemy in front. This charge was most gallantly executed, but the ground over which the soldiers had to pass was very uneven and covered with long grass, and the fire of the enemy's infantry and artillery was so heavy that the charge had to be abandoned after both regiments had lost nearly half their number in killed and wounded. Riall, seeing that any further effort could only result in greater losses without compensating advantage, ordered his troops to retire upon Chippawa. His order was executed with the greatest regularity, the retreat being covered by the 8th Regiment and the light companies of the two other regiments engaged. Hardly a prisoner, except those disabled, was taken by the enemy. One of the 24-pounders had been disabled by a shot which blew up its ammunition wagon, but it was carried off in safety under the protection of the troop of the 19th Dragoons. The British force retired beyond the Chippawa River, the bridge over which was destroyed. A part of Scott's brigade which ventured to approach this bridge was very speedily

driven back by the fire of the tête-de-pont battery at its northern end.

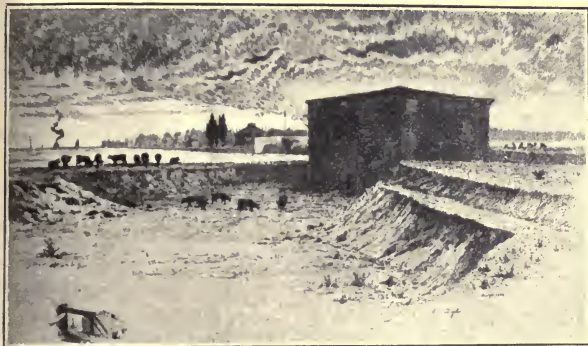
The gallantry of the British army was never more signally displayed than in the battle of Chippawa, and its losses were very severe. Three captains, three subalterns, seven sergeants and one hundred and thirty-five rank and file were killed; three field-officers, five captains, eighteen subalterns, eighteen sergeants, and two hundred and seventy-seven rank and file were wounded; and one subaltern, one sergeant, and forty-four rank and file were missing. Of the latter, nearly all were killed or wounded, only fourteen unwounded prisoners being taken by the Americans. The total British loss was therefore five hundred and fifteen, the Royal Scots losing two hundred and twenty-eight men out of five hundred in the field, of whom sixty-three were killed, and the 100th Regiment losing two hundred and five out of four hundred and fifty men engaged, of whom seventy were killed on the spot. The Lincoln militia lost twelve killed, sixteen wounded and fifteen missing. Among the slain were Captains Rowe and Turney and Lieutenant McDonell. General Riall in his official report spoke in the highest terms of the conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Dixon and of the officers and men of the 2nd Lincoln militia. Their losses, which were much greater than those of the British 8th Regiment, show how closely they were engaged. The Americans had sixty-one killed, two hundred and fifty-five wounded and nineteen missing; a grand total of three hundred and thirty-five.

The Americans claim the battle of Chippawa as a victory, and it was so in the sense that an army which attempts to drive an enemy's force from the field and fails to do so, is defeated. Lossing, with his usual mendacity, states that the American troops engaged numbered only one thousand three hundred and the British one thousand seven hundred. The British and militia on the field, as we have already shown, numbered one thousand eight hundred and thirty, while the American returns show that five of their infantry regiments were under fire besides their artillery and Penn-

sylvania volunteers, to say nothing of the Indians. As Scott's brigade, according to American returns, numbered one thousand three hundred men; the 19th Regiment of Ripley's brigade, three hundred and fifty men; the artillery four hundred and the Pennsylvania volunteers actually engaged three hundred; we have an aggregate of two thousand three hundred and fifty white troops who suffered loss in the battle. But it is a novel doctrine that the two hundred Pennsylvania volunteers, the six hundred New York volunteers, the squadron of cavalry held in reserve, and the three regiments of Ripley's brigade which were stealing through the woods on the British right flank, and whose presence there virtually decided the battle, should not be counted as part of the American force. If there had been no enemy on the British right flank, the 8th Regiment, which was hardly engaged at all, would have made very short work of the American troops in front of it, and the battle would have been won. It was lost because the British had more than two to one against them, because Riall's attack was improvidently made, and because he was enormously overmatched in artillery, having only three guns to oppose nine, and those three of a class not capable of being readily moved from one part of the field to another. General Riall would have acted more wisely if he had stood on the defensive, and many valuable lives would have been saved.

Brown remained inactive on the two days which followed the battle, but on the eighth he prepared to advance. The passage of the Chippawa River at the bridge appeared to him to involve too much risk, but a way was pointed out by which he could cross the river at a point higher up. Riall found that with his insufficient artillery it would be impossible for him to oppose the American advance, his force being now reduced to about one thousand three hundred rank and file of white troops, so on the morning of the eighth he broke camp and retired to Fort George. The bridge over the Chippawa had been destroyed by his orders, but by the help of their boats the greater part of the American army succeeded

in crossing the river the same day, and on the tenth they encamped at Queenston. Riall reached Fort George on the evening of the eighth and was there joined by the Glengarry Regiment, three hundred and fifty strong, and three hundred



FORT MISSISSAGUA

This Fort was situated at the mouth of the Niagara River, opposite Fort Niagara (U.S.), which can be seen in the distance.

incorporated militia, recently arrived from York. Leaving in their places at this fort and Fort Mississagua, which had been recently erected, what was left of the 100th Regiment, and detachments of the 8th and Royal Scots, he started on the morning of the ninth for Burlington Heights to effect a junction with the 103rd Regiment and the flank companies of the 104th. He was fortunate enough to meet these reinforcements at Twenty Mile Creek, and with a force now increased to about two thousand regulars and militia he marched back to Fifteen Mile Creek, thirteen miles from the American camp at Queenston, and there took up his station to await the further movements of the enemy.

When Brown crossed the Niagara River to invade Canada, he issued a general order in which he instructed his troops

that private property was in all cases to be held sacred, and that plundering was prohibited and would be punished with death. This order was wholly disregarded, and from the hour when Brown's army touched the soil of Canada, plundering, incendiarism, and other crimes against the laws of civilized warfare were of daily occurrence. The principal actors in these scenes of misery and distress were the volunteers from New York state, the brothers and relatives of the men who stood on their constitutional rights in the autumn of 1812, and saw their countrymen slaughtered and captured on Queenston Heights without trying to save them. On the twelfth of July, Brigadier-General Swift and one hundred and twenty of these volunteers were sent out from Queenston towards Fort George to reconnoitre. Advancing close to one of the outposts they came upon a corporal and five men, part of a patrolling party of thirty-two rank and file from the light company of the 8th, under Major Evans of that regiment. In attempting to capture these men, a British private shot and mortally wounded General Swift. The British fell back on the rest of the patrol who had instantly advanced on hearing the fire, and although the volunteers attempted to surround them the whole party escaped without loss. This affair was made the pretext for reprisals on the part of the volunteers, and as the peaceful inhabitants were less able to defend themselves than the military, the former had to bear the consequences of American revenge for the fall of Swift.

A week after Swift's death, Colonel Stone, of the New York militia, wantonly burned the village of St. Davids. For this Stone was dismissed from the service without a trial, but this act, which became the more conspicuous because it was done within three miles of General Brown's camp, was but a type of the conduct of the American volunteers and militia at this time. Decent officers of the regular service of the United States looked upon the proceedings with great disfavour. Major McFarland, of the 23rd United States infantry, in a letter dated the twenty-fifth

of July, writes thus of the St. Davids affair and the conduct of the militia and Indians: "The militia and Indians plundered and burnt everything. The whole population is against us; not a foraging party but is fired on, and not infrequently returns with missing numbers. This state was to be anticipated. The Indians were sent off some days since, as they were found useless except to plunder. The militia have burnt several private dwelling-houses, and on the nineteenth instant burnt the village of St. Davids, consisting of about thirty or forty houses. This was done within three miles of camp; and my battalion was sent to cover the retreat, as they (the militia) had been sent to scour the country of some Indians and rangers, and it was presumed they might be pursued. My God! What a service! I have never witnessed such a scene, and had not the commanding officer of the party, Lieutenant-Colonel Stone, been disgraced and sent out of the army, I should have handed in my sheepskin." Here we have the testimony of a respectable American officer as to the disgraceful doings of his own countrymen, and the weight of his evidence is enhanced by the fact that Major McFarland was killed at Lundy's Lane, while gallantly leading his regiment, on the afternoon of the same day that this very letter was written.

General Brown had been promised the coöperation of Chauncey's fleet on the Niagara frontier as early as the tenth of July, but it did not come. On the thirteenth, he wrote to Chauncey in moving terms, begging him to hasten to his assistance. "All accounts agree," said he, "that the force of the enemy in Kingston is very light. Meet me on the lake shore, north of Fort George, with your fleet, and we will be able, I have no doubt, to settle a plan of operations that will break the power of the enemy in Upper Canada, and that in the course of a short time. At all events, let me hear from you. I have looked for your fleet with the greatest anxiety, since the tenth. I do not doubt my ability to meet the enemy in the field, and march in any direction over his country, your fleet carrying for me the necessary supplies.

We can threaten Forts George and Niagara, and carry Burlington Heights and York, and proceed direct to Kingston and carry that place. For God's sake let me see you. Sir James will not fight. Two of his vessels are now in the Niagara River. If you conclude to meet me at the head of the lake, and that immediately, have the goodness to bring the guns and troops that I have ordered from Sacketts Harbour." General Brown was certainly very much to be pitied, for Chauncey, with the timidity of a hare, had the obstinacy of a mule, and a very high idea of his own importance. There is something grotesque in his reply to Brown's appeal for aid: "I shall," said he, "afford every assistance in my power to coöperate with the army whenever it can be done without losing sight of the great object for the attainment of which this fleet has been created—the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet. But that I consider the primary object. We are intended to seek and fight the enemy's fleet, and I shall not be diverted from my efforts to effectuate it by any sinister attempt to render us subordinate to, or an appendage of, the army." This, no doubt, was a fine example of American independence, but it was rather hard on the general who had undertaken to invade Canada.

On the fourteenth, the day after he wrote to Chauncey, General Brown called a council of his officers. He had heard of Riall's movement to Fifteen Mile Creek, but not of his having been reinforced, and he now questioned them as to whether Riall should be attacked or Fort George invested. Brown stated the force under General Riall at two thousand and fifty men, which was almost the exact number, and his own force at two thousand seven hundred regulars and one thousand volunteers, militia and Indians. Generals Ripley and Porter, and the engineer officers, McRee and Wood, advised an immediate attack on Riall, while General Scott and Adjutant-General Gardner advised the investment of Fort George. The latter advice coincided with Brown's own views, and he resolved to adopt it. On the following day Generals Ripley and Porter with their brigades were ordered

to reconnoitre Fort George, and on the twentieth Brown moved forward the remainder of his army from Queenston towards that fort. On the following day he learned for the first time that Riall had been reinforced and had retired to Queenston, which he re-occupied on the twenty-second. Brown in all his movements at this time showed a great deal of timidity. On the twenty-third he received a letter from General Gaines, who was at Sacketts Harbour, informing him that Chauncey was sick and the American fleet in port, so that no coöperation was to be expected in that quarter. Brown at once ordered a retreat upon Chippawa. He states in his official despatch that his determination was to disencumber himself of baggage and march directly to Burlington Heights, and that his retirement to Chippawa was to mask this intention and draw from Schlosser a small supply of provisions. On the night of the twenty-fourth, General Brown, with the bulk of his army, encamped on the south bank of the Chippawa; the same night, General Riall's advance under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Pearson was pressing on through the darkness towards the Niagara River, and at seven o'clock on the morning of the twenty-fifth stood on the memorable battlefield which that day was to be consecrated by their valour, Lundy's Lane.

The British advance was composed of the Glengarry Regiment, three hundred and fifty strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel Battersby, forty men of the 104th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Drummond, the incorporated militia, three hundred in number, under Lieutenant-Colonel Robinson, about two hundred sedentary militia of the county of Lincoln, under Lieutenant-Colonel Parry of the 103rd, Major Lisle's troop of the 19th Dragoons, and a detachment of artillery with two 24-pounders and a howitzer, and three 6-pounders, in all about nine hundred and eighty rank and file. The main body of Riall's army under Colonel Scott, which he had ordered to follow the advance at three o'clock on the morning of the twenty-fifth, was composed of the 103rd Regiment, about five hundred strong, the remaining men of the two

flank companies of the 104th, fifty men of the Royal Scots, three hundred and thirty of the 8th and three hundred sedentary militia, or about one thousand two hundred and seventy rank and file. Had these troops marched at the hour ordered, they would have joined the advanced detachment during the forenoon, and the battle of Lundy's Lane would probably never have been fought. But although under arms at that hour, the order for their march was countermanded, and they did not move until past mid-day, and did not arrive on the field of battle until after nine at night. In the meantime, great deeds had been done on that famous field which overlooks the world's greatest cataract.

General Brown in his camp at Chippawa was wholly unaware of the presence of the British advance at Lundy's Lane, only three miles distant, but about noon a courier arrived from Colonel Swift who commanded a party of New York volunteers at Lewiston, advising him that the British were in considerable force at Queenston and on the heights above it, that four ships of the British fleet had arrived on the preceding night and were then lying near Fort Niagara, and that a number of boats were in view moving up the river. A few minutes after this intelligence had been received, he was further informed by Captain Denman, of the quartermaster's department, that the British were landing at Lewiston and that his baggage and stores at Schlosser were in danger of immediate capture. This alarming news led Brown to believe that a raid on the American frontier was contemplated, and he conceived that the best way to divert the British from that object was to re-occupy Queenston. General Scott was accordingly directed to advance with his brigade and perform that duty, and he left the American camp between four and five o'clock in the afternoon in profound ignorance of the fact that Riall's advance army was but three miles away.

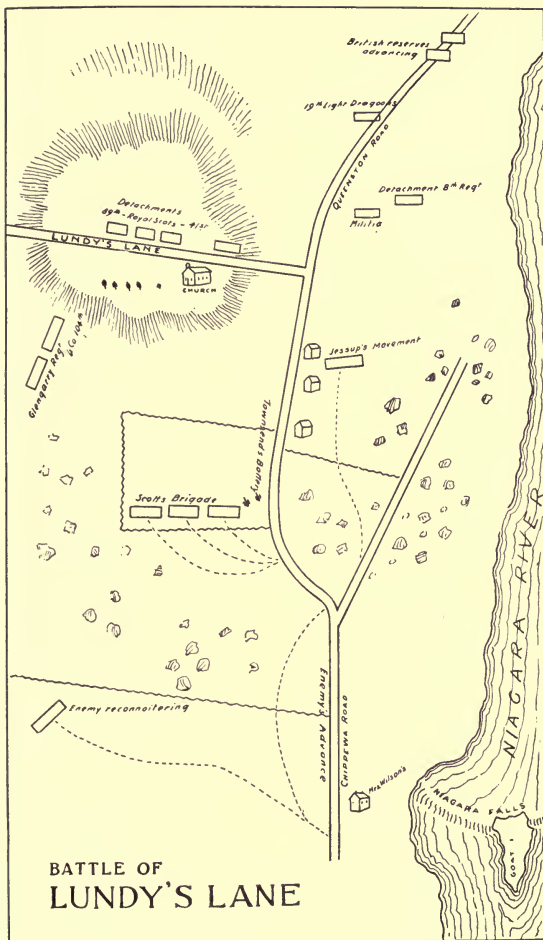
The cause of the sudden appearance of a British force at Lewiston, which had so much alarmed and astonished General Brown, must now be related. General Drummond was at

Kingston when the news of the battle of Chippawa arrived there, and he instantly marched to York with the available force of the second battalion of the 89th Regiment, about four hundred rank and file, leaving orders for De Watteville's Regiment to follow. On the evening of the twenty-fourth he embarked at York with his reinforcements on board four vessels of Sir James Yeo's fleet, and arrived at Fort Niagara at daylight on the twenty-fifth. There he learned from Lieutenant-Colonel Tucker that General Riall was believed to be moving towards the Falls of Niagara to support the advance of his division, which he had pushed on to that place the preceding evening. In consequence of this intelligence, General Drummond ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison, the distinguished officer who won the battle at Chrystler's Field, to advance to the falls with the 89th and detachments of the Royal Scots and the 8th drawn from Forts George and Mississagua, and unite with Riall. At the same time he ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Tucker to proceed up the right bank of the Niagara River with three hundred of the 41st and about two hundred of the Royal Scots and a body of Indians, supported on the river by a party of seamen under Captain Dobbs of the *Charwell*. The object of this movement was to disperse or capture the party of volunteers and some other troops under Colonel Swift, which were encamped at Lewiston. Some unavoidable delay which occurred in the march of Lieutenant-Colonel Tucker's troops gave Swift and his two hundred volunteers an opportunity of escaping to Schlosser, from which place they crossed over and joined Brown at Chippawa. The British captured about nine hundred tents at Lewiston and a quantity of baggage and provisions belonging to Brown's army, after which they crossed over to Queenston and joined Morrison's command. Here General Drummond refreshed his troops, and, having sent back the 41st, except the light company, and the 100th Regiment to garrison the three forts at the mouth of the river, hastened forward with the 89th Regiment, the detachments of the Royal Scots and the 8th Regiment, and the

light company of the 41st, in all less than eight hundred and fifty men, to join General Riall's division at the falls.

While General Drummond was thus advancing from the north to Niagara, General Scott was moving towards the same point from the south. This officer had with him his own brigade, consisting of the 9th, 11th, 22nd, and 25th Regiments of infantry, a troop of regular cavalry under Captain Harris, one hundred New York volunteer cavalry under Captain Pentland, and Towson's artillery with two fieldpieces. American authorities place this force at "full one thousand two hundred," but Scott had with him at least one thousand four hundred and fifty rank and file. His four regiments, which numbered one thousand three hundred men, had lost two hundred and fifty at Chippawa twenty days before, but one of them, the 22nd, had been reinforced by one hundred men that very day, which would give him an infantry force of at least one thousand one hundred and fifty, even in the improbable event of none of the other regiments having been reinforced, or of none of the slightly wounded having returned to the ranks.

At the house of Mrs. Wilson, opposite the falls, Scott for the first time learned that the British occupied the ground about Lundy's Lane. He at once despatched a mounted aid to General Brown for reinforcements, and pushed forward towards the British front, Brown immediately ordered General Ripley with his brigade and all the artillery to hasten to the support of Scott, and left for the scene of action after giving directions for Porter to follow as speedily as possible with his brigade of volunteers. Scott advanced to Lundy's Lane under the belief that the British force in front of him must be weak, and he was confirmed in this view when he saw that it had retired from its position. General Riall, who was with the British advance, did not deem it prudent to await an attack with so few troops, for he thought the whole American army was advancing against him, so he prudently ordered a retreat, a step which would certainly not have been necessary had his main body marched from



Twelve Mile Creek at the hour originally designed. Riall directed Colonel Pearson with his advance to retire to Queenston, and sent similar orders to Colonel Scott, who with the main body of the army was now advancing from Twelve Mile Creek.

When General Drummond reached the vicinity of Lundy's Lane with his detachment, he met Colonel Pearson's command in full retreat, and was amazed to learn that the main body of Riall's army, so far from having arrived, had been ordered to retire to Queenston. He found Riall's position almost in the occupation of the enemy whose columns were within six hundred yards of the hill, while the surrounding woods were filled with his light troops. Drummond instantly countermanded the orders which had been given for a retreat, and formed his line of battle. At a distance of about half a mile from the Niagara River the road from Chippawa to Queenston runs in a northerly direction. From this road, and at right angles to it, runs Lundy's Lane going to the westward. The lane passes over an eminence of no great elevation which slopes towards the south. On this hill to the south of the lane, Drummond placed his guns, two 24-pounders, two 6-pounders, and one 5½-inch howitzer. Behind these guns, which formed the centre of his position, and in the rear of the hill, he placed the 89th Regiment, the Royal Scots detachment and the light company of the 41st Regiment, their left resting on the Queenston Road. On the left of this road the battalion of incorporated militia and the detachment of the 8th Regiment were placed, the squadron of the 19th Light Dragoons being in the rear on the road. Drummond's right, which formed an obtuse angle with the centre, consisted of the Glengarry Regiment and the half company of the 104th, and was placed in the woods a little advanced so as to flank any attack from that quarter. Drummond's entire force present in the field, including artillery and cavalry, was less than eight hundred rank and file.

The sudden retirement of the British from their position

at Lundy's Lane, and their equally sudden re-occupation of it, committed General Scott to an attack which a more prudent commander would have avoided. As he rushed impetuously up the hill he discovered that instead of being deserted it was strongly held by Drummond's little army. Scott's attack was commenced about half-past six o'clock and was made mainly against the British left on the Queenston Road. The east and west sides of this road were held respectively by the battalion of the incorporated militia and the 89th Regiment, and against them Scott placed three of his regiments. His other regiment, the 25th, under Major Jessop, had been sent through the bushes on the extreme British left so that they might be threatened with a flank attack in that quarter while Scott was attacking them on the Queenston Road. The smallness of Drummond's force made it impossible for him to occupy the whole line between Lundy's Lane and the river, and Jessop was thus able, without any serious contest, to establish himself in the space between the extreme left of the British and the river, but at this stage of the battle he attempted nothing more. On the Queenston Road the contest was fierce; the 89th and the militia battalion resisted every effort of the enemy, and Scott's brigade was driven back with heavy loss. His whole force would have been destroyed had it been possible to advance the British wing against his flank, but the near approach of the enemy's reinforcements rendered such a movement hazardous, and it was not attempted.

Scott had been engaged, according to General Brown's report, "not less than an hour," when he was reinforced by the brigades of Ripley and Porter, and the whole of the artillery. Ripley's four regiments of infantry had sustained hardly any loss in the battle of Chippawa, and now numbered about one thousand two hundred and eighty rank and file. They had been joined that very day by the 1st Regiment, two hundred and fifty strong, and were accompanied by Hindman's corps of artillery. Ripley's brigade, therefore, numbered one thousand six hundred and thirty rank and

file. Porter's brigade consisted originally of six hundred New York volunteers and five hundred Pennsylvania troops. The mounted men of the New York contingent, one hundred in number, had accompanied Scott, but Porter had been joined by two hundred additional New York volunteers under Colonel Swift, and he had under his command one hundred and fifty Canadian or traitor volunteers under the infamous Wilcox. Porter's infantry, therefore, numbered one thousand three hundred and fifty and the reserve artillery about two hundred. The entire strength of the reinforcements under Ripley and Porter, which joined Scott within an hour after the commencement of the battle of Lundy's Lane, would, therefore, be three thousand two hundred men, which, with Scott's original force of one thousand four hundred and fifty, would make upwards of four thousand six hundred which the Americans brought into the field that day. During the two hours which followed the arrival of Ripley and Porter on the field, the British had to contend against an almost threefold superiority of force, for no reinforcements reached General Drummond until after nine o'clock.

It was now after sunset and was rapidly growing dark. As General Scott's brigade had suffered severely, Brown withdrew the three regiments of it which were making a direct attack on each side of the Queenston Road, and replaced them with the fresh troops of Ripley's brigade. At the same time Porter's brigade of volunteers was advanced on the left to attack the British right. The accession of these fresh combatants naturally put a severe strain upon the British, and the determined attack that was made on the centre of their position weakened their left wing.

This enabled Jessop with his 25th Regiment to force back the troops on the British left, and for a short time obtain possession of the Queenston Road, during which period General Riall, who had been severely wounded and was passing to the rear to have his wounds dressed, accidentally rode into a party of the enemy in the darkness,

and was taken prisoner with his aide, Captain Loring. This was the only advantage the momentary occupation of the road gave the enemy, for the militia battalion and the detachment of the 8th which had been forced back, formed in the rear of the 89th fronting the road, and so secured the flank. In a few minutes the advanced position of the American right became untenable, and they were driven off the road and back to their own line with the loss of about one-third of their force.

The British guns, which were in front of the centre of their position, were causing great havoc among the enemy, and General Brown saw readily enough that, unless they could be silenced, the battle was lost, notwithstanding his great superiority of force. The guns were defended by the light company of the 41st, and three hundred and twenty men of the Royal Scots, both of which had already suffered severe losses. General Brown now ordered Colonel James Miller, of the 21st, to take his regiment and attack, and, if possible, capture the British guns on the heights. Detachments of the 17th and 19th United States infantry were assigned to him to aid in the movement, and the 1st Regiment of United States infantry under Colonel Nicholas was ordered to advance on the left and make a feigned attack, in order to withdraw the attention of the British from the real object of the movement. The 23rd Regiment of United States infantry was also ordered to support Miller. It will thus be seen that the attack on the British guns, instead of being made by but one regiment, as American writers almost unanimously assert, was made by about seven hundred men belonging to three separate regiments, and was supported by seven hundred more comprising the effective force of two other regiments. The 1st Regiment was now thrown against the right of the British centre, but was received with such a deadly volley by the troops there, and charged so fiercely with the bayonet, that it broke and fled, and was rallied with great difficulty. This repulse, however discreditable to the regiment, served Miller's pur-

pose very well, for it enabled him to creep up in the darkness to within a few feet of the British guns without being discovered. A volley of musketry stretched the gunners on the ground, either dead or wounded, and before the British infantry supports could advance all Drummond's artillery was in the hands of the enemy. The 23rd Regiment was now brought up to the support of Miller, and the 1st Regiment, which had been rallied, was placed on his left. The British infantry in the centre, now greatly reduced in numbers, made two or three spirited charges to recover the cannon, but the Americans were too strong to be dislodged at that time.

It was now after nine o'clock and very dark, but the reinforcements under Colonel Scott were rapidly approaching. These numbered, as already stated, about one thousand two hundred and seventy rank and file, and comprised the 103rd Regiment, about three hundred sedentary militia, detachments of the Royal Scots and 104th Regiment, the remainder of the 8th Regiment, and a few artillerymen with two 6-pounders. Unfortunately, owing to the extreme darkness of the night, the 103rd Regiment and the sedentary militia under Colonel Hamilton, with the two fieldpieces, passed by mistake into the centre of the American army now posted on the hill, and after sustaining a very heavy and destructive fire fell back in confusion. These troops were rallied by the active exertions of their officers and placed in the second line, as were Scott's other reinforcements, except the company of Royal Scots and the flank companies of the 104th with which General Drummond prolonged his front line to the right, so as to guard against the danger of being outflanked in that quarter. A determined effort was now made to recover the guns which the enemy had taken, and it was finally successful. The Americans were driven back, and the cannon regained with the exception of one 6-pounder, which the Americans had put by mistake on one of their own limbers, leaving their gun, which they had thus exchanged for it, on a British limber.



THE BATTLE OF LUNDY'S LANE

The British captured this American 6-pounder, and also a 5½-inch howitzer, which the American artillerymen had brought up, and so gained one gun.

The battle raged for nearly three hours after the arrival of Colonel Scott's reinforcements, and consisted mainly of vigorous but unsuccessful efforts on the part of the Americans to regain possession of the hill and of the British cannon. All these attempts were defeated by the determined bravery of the infantry who guarded the guns. Finally, about midnight, the Americans gave up the contest and retreated with great precipitation to their camp at Chippawa, leaving all their dead and badly wounded behind, and the victorious British in possession of the hard-fought field of Lundy's Lane.

General Drummond, in his excellent and detailed account of the battle, dwells with particular emphasis on the conduct of the Canadian militia. He says, "The zeal, loyalty and bravery with which the militia of this part of the province has come forward to coöperate with His Majesty's troops in the expulsion of the enemy and their conspicuous gallantry in this, and in the action of the fifth instant, claim my warmest thanks." He refers in another place to "the very creditable and excellent defence made by the incorporated militia battalion under Lieutenant-Colonel Robinson," and certainly the character of its efforts is well attested to by its losses, which amounted to one hundred and forty-two out of about three hundred men in the field. The sedentary militia suffered less severely, but General Drummond describes how they, with the other troops in the centre, "repeatedly, when hard pressed, formed round the colours of the 89th Regiment, and invariably repulsed the desperate efforts made against them."

The British losses in the battle of Lundy's Lane amounted to eighty-four killed, five hundred and fifty-nine wounded, one hundred and ninety-three missing, and forty-two taken prisoners, a total of eight hundred and seventy-eight. Among the killed were five officers; and thirty-nine officers were

wounded, including both generals. The militia lost heavily in officers, sixteen of them being either killed or wounded. The losses of the Americans, according to their official returns, were one hundred and seventy-one killed, five hundred and seventy-two wounded, and one hundred and ten missing,



COLONEL TITUS GEER SIMONS, U.E.L.

In command of the 2nd York militia at Lundy's Lane, where he was severely wounded, three grape shot striking his sword arm. He commanded all the militia in attack on Black Rock.

a total of eight hundred and fifty-four. This return, however, is incomplete, for it makes no mention of the losses of the 17th and 19th Regiments, both of which were in the battle

and closely engaged. If they suffered in the same proportion as the two other regiments of Ripley's brigade, we would have to add one hundred and eighty-three to the total of American losses to make it complete, which would bring it up to one thousand and forty-seven, and this may be near the truth. At all events, two hundred and ten American dead, besides a great many wounded, were found on the field of battle next morning, and between Lundy's Lane and Chippawa were a number of fresh graves in which the bodies had been so slightly covered that the arms and legs were in many instances exposed to view.

The battle of Lundy's Lane has been claimed as an American victory, and this claim appears to have been founded on General Brown's official report. Bonaparte remarked of Marmont's account of the battle of Salamanca that it contained "more complicated stuffing than a clock." Brown's report of the battle of Lundy's Lane belongs to the same order of composition in which the narrator by vigorous misrepresentation endeavours to make up for his own lack of success in the field.

Brown says:—"While retiring from the field, I saw and felt that the victory was complete on our part, if proper measures were promptly adopted to secure it. The exhaustion of the men was, however, such as made some refreshment necessary. They particularly required water. I myself was extremely sensible of the want of this necessary article. I therefore believed it proper that General Ripley and the troops should return to camp, after bringing off the dead, the wounded and the artillery; and in this I saw no difficulty, as the enemy had entirely ceased to act." General Brown, who was wounded, left the field after giving these orders to Ripley, and when that general returned to camp with his army, Brown says: "I now sent for him, and, after giving him my reasons for the course I was about to adopt, ordered him to put the troops in the best possible condition; to give them the necessary refreshment; to take with him the pickets and camp guards, and every other



THE MONUMENT AT LUNDY'S LANE

description of force, to put himself on the field of battle as the day dawned, and there to meet and beat the enemy if he again appeared. To this order he made no objection, and I relied on its execution. It was not executed."

Unless Brown was in this report deliberately stating what he knew to be false, for the purpose of deceiving his own countrymen, he did not know anything about the battle of Lundy's Lane in which he professed to command. He was not aware that the reason the British ceased to act was because they had secured their guns and position, and were content to hold them until the wearied troops had a little rest. The Americans had only marched between two and three miles before the battle, but Drummond's men had marched fourteen miles, and the reinforcements under Colonel Scott, much farther, having been nine hours on the march and eighteen under arms when they arrived on the field of battle. Had he inquired more particularly of Ripley, he would have learned from that officer that, instead of obeying the orders that Brown says he gave him, he had left all of his dead and most of his wounded on the field, and so far from bringing away the British guns he had left two of his own in the possession of Drummond's army. General Brown in his despatch grows quite pathetic over the death of his aide, Captain Spencer. "I shall ever think," says he, "of this young man with pride and regret;" yet he forgets to inform the secretary of war that this "young man" was left wounded on the field of battle to become a prisoner of the British; and the fact that Spencer did not die until the fifth of August, eleven days after the battle, shows that Brown's report was "cooked" up after that date, to suit the palates of his countrymen.

General Ripley, strange to say, was no more obedient to Brown's order to return to the field and beat the enemy than he had been to that which required him to bring away his guns, and the wounded and dead. On the morning after the battle, he destroyed the Chippawa bridge and his works there, threw a large part of his stores, provisions and camp

equipage, with a number of tents, into the Niagara River, set fire to Street's Mills and fled with his army to Fort Erie. Indeed, so convinced was Ripley of the impossibility of maintaining himself in Canada, that he refused to remain even in Fort Erie without a specific written order from Brown, and the sequel of the campaign shows that Ripley's judgment was sound. If the Americans had retreated at once to their own shore it would have been no more than a manly admission of defeat, and the world would have been spared



MEDAL STRUCK IN HONOUR OF GENERAL BROWN

the pitiful spectacle of a "victorious" American army cooped up for weeks after the battle of Lundy's Lane within the walls of a fortress, by a weaker force of British regulars which they were wholly unable to meet in the field.

The Americans, while claiming a victory at Lundy's Lane, have endeavoured to lessen the disgrace of their defeat by making their own numbers smaller and those of the British larger than the real figures. Brown makes no mention of the numbers on either side, but Lossing says that the British had about four thousand five hundred and the

Americans a little less than two thousand six hundred. The detailed statements that have already been given render it unnecessary to make any other comment on these figures further than that they are absolutely false. The Americans brought upwards of four thousand six hundred men into the field, while the British force up to nine o'clock did not exceed eighteen hundred. The total British force brought into the field, first and last, was about three thousand. Lundy's Lane was, therefore, not only a British victory, but it was a victory won against greatly superior numbers. It was a triumph of which every Canadian has reason to feel proud, for on that memorable day our forefathers stood side by side with the bravest of British veterans, and suffered nothing in reputation by the association. The four British regiments which have "Niagara" inscribed on their flags possess no more honourable decoration, although among them are the Royal Scots, who have fought on almost every British field from Blenheim to the present day. That grand old regiment, the first of the British line, fought five hundred strong at Chippawa and there lost two hundred and twenty-eight men. It stood three hundred and seventy strong at Lundy's Lane, and there lost one hundred and seventy-three of its number. Such were the British regiments that fought at Lundy's Lane, and it is glory enough for the Canadian militia who fought on that field that they were worthy to stand beside them.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SIEGE OF FORT ERIE

THE defeated American army, after its flight from Lundy's Lane, reached Fort Erie on the twenty-seventh of July and sought shelter behind its defences. During the interval of twenty-four days since its capture by General Brown, the place had been greatly strengthened, and was now capable of sheltering a considerable army. As soon as Ripley got his men into camp he set them all to work industriously digging, and by the third of August, when General Drummond reached Fort Erie, the new defensive works of the place were, for the most part, complete. Thus General Brown's army of invasion which he had been for months preparing for an attack on Canada, the same army with which he said in his letter to Chauncey he would be able to march in any direction over this country, was, after a campaign of four weeks, reduced to so miserable a condition that it did not dare to meet the British in the field, but was forced to seek shelter behind the walls of a fort.

General Drummond's advance had been delayed by the rebuilding of the bridge over the Chippawa for the passage of his troops and cannon. He had sent home the whole of his sedentary militia whose harvest operations now demanded their attention, and had been joined by De Watteville's Regiment from Kingston and the 41st Regiment from Fort George, which was now garrisoned by all that was left of the 89th Regiment, except the light company which remained with the army. General Drummond's force, at the time of his arrival in front of Fort Erie, including the embodied militia numbered less than three thousand two hundred

rank and file. The American forces at Fort Erie, if we assume their own statement of their losses at Lundy's Lane to have been correct, must have numbered almost three thousand eight hundred men, but, after making a liberal allowance for error in the American official returns due to the demoralized state of their regiments after the battle, it is clear that the American army which General Ripley took into the fort could not have been less than three thousand five hundred men. These troops were encamped on a plateau of about fifteen acres on the shores of the lake, which the new defences of Fort Erie enclosed, and besides these formidable works they were protected by the three armed schooners *Porcupine*, *Somers* and *Ohio* which were anchored in front of the fort.

The American batteries at Black Rock, distant only a mile and a half from Fort Erie, were a powerful aid to the defence of the fort with their flanking fire. Drummond resolved to attempt their capture, and early on the morning of the third of August sent Lieutenant-Colonel Tucker with six companies of the 41st, the light company of the 89th, and the two flank companies of the 104th Regiment, the whole force numbering less than five hundred men, to effect that object. This detachment was landed about half a mile below Shogeoquady Creek, but unfortunately the Americans had been informed by deserters of the attempt that was to be made. When the British reached the creek, they found the bridge over it removed, and Major Morgan with two hundred and fifty riflemen and a body of volunteers and militia on the opposite bank, covered by a breastwork of logs. The British were met by a heavy fire, and the attempt had to be abandoned after they had suffered a loss of twenty-five in killed and wounded. The Americans were so well protected that they had only two killed and eight wounded.

On the fifth Brigadier-General Gaines arrived at Fort Erie, and took command of the army there, Ripley again resuming command of his brigade. On the following day Morgan with his riflemen, who had been brought over to the

Canadian side of the river, was sent through the woods, between the British lines and the fort, with orders to so manœuvre as to draw them out of their position to a strong line of American troops posted on the plain below the fort. This little stratagem did not succeed; the British refused to be drawn, and Morgan had to retire after losing nine of his men in a skirmish with the British light troops.

As the presence of the three American armed schooners which lay on the lake in front of Fort Erie was a serious impediment to any attack upon that place, Captain Dobbs of the brig *Charwell* of Sir James Yeo's fleet went up from Fort George with a party of seamen and marines for the purpose of attempting their capture. The *Charwell's* seamen carried the captain's gig on their shoulders from Queenston to Frenchman's Creek, a distance of eighteen miles, but the British had not even a boat on Lake Erie, and it was necessary to carry the gig and five *bateaux* from Frenchman's Creek to a point on the lake several miles to the westward of the fort, a distance of eight miles through the woods. This arduous task was accomplished by the militia under Lieutenant-Colonel Nichol, quartermaster-general of that force, and on the evening of the eleventh of August the boats were launched upon the lake. Captain Dobbs and Lieutenant Radcliffe of the *Netley*, with seventy-five seamen and marines, at once embarked in them, Captain Dobbs leading one division consisting of his gig and two of the *bateaux*, and Lieutenant Radcliffe the other comprising the other three *bateaux*. Between eleven and twelve o'clock at night the boats were discovered a short distance ahead of the *Somers* and hailed. They answered "provision boats," which deceived the officer on deck, as boats with supplies had been in the habit of passing. Before he discovered his mistake the boats drifted across his hawse, cut his cables and ran him aboard with a volley of musketry which wounded two of his men, and before the others could get on deck the schooner was captured. In another moment the boats were alongside of the *Ohio*, which was also taken after a more severe struggle in which

Lieutenant Radcliffe and one seaman were killed and six seamen and marines wounded. The *Ohio* lost one seaman killed and six of her crew were wounded, including her commander, Lieutenant Conkling and Sailing-Master McCally. The British boats had drifted past the third schooner, the *Porcupine*, before the *Somers* and *Ohio* were secured, and she was not attacked, but neither she nor the shore batteries made any attempt to molest the British as they passed. The two captured schooners were carried into Frenchman's Creek. This affair was one of the boldest enterprises of the war. The *Somers* had a crew of thirty men and carried a long 24-pounder and a short 32-pounder; the complement and armament of the *Ohio* were similar.

On the day after this gallant capture General Drummond opened his batteries against Fort Erie. They consisted of one long iron and two short brass 24-pounders, a long 18-pounder, a 24-pounder carronade and a 10-inch mortar. These batteries were stationed about six hundred yards from the enemy's nearest works, but, after a cannonade which lasted two days, very little impression seems to have been made on the American defences, and their losses did not exceed fifty killed and wounded. As the fort was in no sense invested and could not be so long as the Americans held command of the lake, General Drummond determined to attempt its capture by direct assault.

Fort Erie, when it was taken from the British, was a small work standing about one hundred yards from the lake, with two demi-bastions, a ravelin and two blockhouses. The Americans erected a strong redoubt between the demi-bastions, and outside of them two large bastions. On the extreme right of their encampment, and close to the lakeshore, they built a strong stonework and connected it with the old fort by continuous earthworks seven feet in height, with a ditch and abattis in front. This stonework, which was named the Douglas battery, mounted an 18 and a 6-pounder, *en barbette*. On the old fort itself, a 24, an 18 and a 12-pounder were mounted. From the left or south side of the old fort,

and in a line nearly parallel to the lake shore, strong parapet breastworks were built for a distance of nine hundred yards with two ditches and an abattis in front. At the southwestern extremity of this line of works, on a natural mound of sand called Snake Hill, a battery twenty-five feet high was erected and five guns mounted upon it. This was called Towson's redoubt. Between it and the old fort were two other batteries each mounting two guns. From Towson's redoubt to the lakeshore was a line of abattis, thus completing the enclosure, which was about fifteen acres in extent. As the garrison of Fort Erie had been reinforced by Morgan's riflemen, as well as by a considerable force from Lake Ontario, it must have numbered at least four thousand men at this time. It certainly showed no small amount of daring to assault a fort with such excellent defences and so strong a garrison as Fort Erie then possessed. Whether such a measure was altogether prudent, in view of the result, may perhaps be doubted.

General Drummond arranged his assaulting force into three columns; the largest under Colonel Fischer consisted of the 8th and De Watteville's Regiments with the light companies of the 89th and 100th Regiments and a detachment of artillery, the whole numbering about one thousand three hundred rank and file. The duty of this right column was to attack the enemy's redoubt at Snake Hill and carry the works in its vicinity. The centre column under Lieutenant-Colonel Drummond of the 104th, consisted of the flank companies of that regiment and of the 41st, with a party of seamen and marines, the whole numbering about two hundred rank and file. This column was to attack the old fort directly. The left column under Lieutenant-Colonel Scott of the 103rd Regiment, was composed of that regiment, five hundred strong, and the flank companies of the Royal Scots, making altogether six hundred and fifty rank and file. Its duty was to attack the enemy's right at the Douglas battery.

At two o'clock on the morning of the fifteenth of August, the British right column advanced to attack Towson's bat-

tery on Snake Hill. The troops moved in two columns, the advance consisting of the flank companies of De Watteville's and the 8th Regiments, and the light companies of the 89th and 100th led by Major Evans of the 8th, and the main body composed of the remainder of De Watteville's and the 8th under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer in person. Captain Powell of the Glengarry Regiment conducted the column, Sergeant Powell of the 19th Dragoons, who was familiar with the ground, acting as guide. To prevent any musket from giving the alarm to the enemy, the men had been deprived of their flints, a very unwise arrangement as it turned out, for the garrison was on the alert, and the men were thus in a manner disarmed while exposed to a deadly fire. As they advanced impetuously to the attack they were received with deadly discharges of grape from the guns of Towson's battery, and from the musketry of the enemy's infantry. Yet so sudden and daring was their onset that they almost surrounded the enemy's picket outside the fort, and pursued them so closely that Major Villatte of De Watteville's Regiment, Captain Powell and Lieutenant Young of the 8th, with about fifty men of the light companies of these two regiments, entered the abattis with the flying enemy and got to the rear of Towson's redoubt. Here an entirely unexpected obstacle presented itself, which precluded any hope of success; the scaling-ladders were too short to ascend the redoubt, being but sixteen feet in length, while the fortress to be scaled was twenty-five feet high. This checked any further attempt in that quarter, but on the right, in the face of a deadly fire to which the soldiers could not reply, the remainder of the attacking column attempted to scale the abattis between the redoubt and the water. After five charges, which were most gallantly persevered in, they were forced to retire, the abattis being found to be impenetrable. At the same time a part of De Watteville's and the 8th Regiment, marching too near the lake in the darkness, became entangled between the rocks and the water, and being exposed to a very heavy fire, many lives were lost. The right attack

had finally to be abandoned, after the column had suffered a loss of two hundred and thirteen in killed, wounded and missing, of which two-thirds were of De Watteville's Regiment.

The attack of the left and centre columns did not take place until the contest with the right column had commenced. Both columns advanced at the same moment, the left column moving along the margin of the water while the centre column proceeded directly against the old fort, the fire of which was immediately directed against it from its salient bastion. At the same time the guns on the Douglas battery opened on the left column with great vigour, assisted by the musketry of the New York and Pennsylvania volunteers. The left column was checked by this destructive fusillade at a distance of about fifty yards from the abattis, but again advanced with redoubled fury. Before they could plant their scaling-ladders, however, a discharge of grape from the Douglas battery swept away almost one-third of the column, killing among others its gallant leader, Colonel Scott. The attempt on the left was then abandoned.

In the meantime Lieutenant-Colonel Drummond of the 104th, despite the tremendous fire with which he was assailed, had persevered in his attack on the fort. Three times his detachment was driven back from the parapets in which they had effected a partial lodgment, but his men were not discouraged. A fourth attempt was made, the parapet was won and the enemy driven out of the salient bastion. In the desperate struggle for its possession which followed, Lieutenant-Colonel Drummond was killed, and many other officers wounded, but this did not check the British advance in the slightest degree. To quote the words of an American historian of the war: "The most obstinate previous parts of the engagement formed no kind of parallel to the violence and desperation of the present conflict. Not all the efforts of Major Hindman and his command, nor Major Trimble's infantry, nor a detachment of riflemen under Captain Birdsall, who had posted himself in the ravelin opposite the gateway

of the fort, could dislodge the determined and intrepid enemy from the bastion, though the deadly effects of our fire prevented their approach beyond it. It was now in his entire possession." Effort after effort was made to dislodge the British from the bastion, but they all failed. Captain Birdsall with his rifle regiment and some infantry, charged them, but he was wounded and his men driven back. Detachments of the 11th, 19th and 22nd United States infantry were introduced into the interior of the bastion for the purpose of driving back the undaunted British, but this attempt failed like those that had preceded it. The American artillery, from a demi-bastion of the fort, and the small-arms men kept up an incessant and destructive fire upon the attacking party, and, as it was now daylight, they suffered heavy losses, yet they still held their ground. At this moment the 103rd Regiment, which had been turned from the left attack, advanced to the bastion in spite of the enfilading fire of the Douglas battery and was about to rush it to reinforce the heroic soldiers of the centre column, when a sudden tremour was felt like the first shock of an earthquake. In an instant the bastion was blown up with a terrible explosion, and all that were upon it or near it were killed or wounded. An eye-witness says that as the bastion blew up, "a jet of flame, mingled with fragments of timber, earth, stone and bodies of men, rose to a height of one hundred or two hundred feet in the air, and fell in a shower of ruins to a great distance all around." So destructive were the effects of this dreadful explosion that there was no longer any coherent body of troops left in front of the fort to continue the attack, and the wasted remains of the centre and left columns withdrew from the field.

The British official returns of the loss in this desperate affair put the number of killed at fifty-seven, the wounded at three hundred and nine, and the missing at five hundred and thirty-nine, a total of nine hundred and five. It was stated, however, by General Drummond in his despatch that almost all of those returned as missing might be considered

as wounded or killed by the explosion, and left in the hands of the enemy. This was, unfortunately, only too correct a statement of the case. The number of British dead left on the field was two hundred and twenty-two, while one hundred and seventy-four wounded and one hundred and eighty-six unwounded prisoners remained in the hands of the enemy. The American loss numbered seventeen killed, fifty-six wounded, and eleven taken prisoners, a total of eighty-four men.

The unfortunate error which sent the right column to attack Towson's redoubt with scaling-ladders that were too short, and without flints for their muskets, made any success in that quarter practically impossible. Yet there is ample consolation to the Canadian reader for the failure of the attack on Fort Erie in the contemplation of the heroism of the centre column which has never been surpassed since arms were borne by man, and in the thought that the leader of that column, who died at the head of his men, and a large part of the troops that composed it, were Canadians. Yet as we consider this glorious example of human daring, so honourable to the virtues of man, what are we to think of the American general, Edmund P. Gaines, who in a despatch written on the day of the assault on Fort Erie, wrote as follows: "They attacked us on each flank, got possession of the salient bastion of old Fort Erie, which was regained at the point of the bayonet with a dreadful slaughter." This man, who prefaces his falsehood with the remark, "my heart is gladdened with gratitude to heaven," knew right well that the bastion was not "regained at the point of the bayonet," but that the gallant men who had won it at the point of the bayonet, were destroyed by an explosion of gunpowder, which if not fired by the hand of Gaines himself, was the result of his immediate orders. On this point there can be no doubt. Jabez Fisk, a soldier in the American army, who was in Fort Erie at the time made the following statement in writing, of what occurred. "Three or four hundred of the enemy had got into the bastion. At this time an Ameri-

can officer came running up, and said, 'General Gaines, the bastion is full. I can blow them all to hell in a minute!' They both passed back through a stone building, and in a short time the bastion and the British were high in the air. General Gaines soon returned, swinging his hat, and shouting: 'Hurrah for Little York!'" It would be a waste of words after this to make further comments on any statement made by Gaines. Fort Erie was, a few days later, relieved of his presence in a manner that a believer in the Mikado's theory of making the punishment fit the crime, would have thought very apposite. As he was sitting at his desk a British shell fell through the roof of his quarters, passed through his writing desk and exploded at his feet, almost killing the "gladdened Gaines," and compelling him to relinquish the command.

Leaving the siege of Fort Erie for the present, it is now necessary to deal with a number of important occurrences in other parts of Canada. After the Americans obtained control of Lake Erie, they resolved to recover the fort at Mackinac which had been taken from them at the very beginning of the war. To effect this, an expedition was organized under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Croghan, who had acquired some celebrity by his defence of Fort Stephenson. This expedition was to have started from Detroit early in April, but it did not get away until the beginning of July. In the meantime Mackinac had been reinforced by ninety men under Lieutenant-Colonel McDouall, consisting of a company of the Newfoundland Regiment, twenty-three seamen of the Lake Ontario fleet, and a few Canadian volunteers. This detachment, with the fieldguns and a supply of provisions and military stores, reached its destination in *bateaux* from a port on Lake Huron, on the eighteenth of May. Early in June an American force took possession of the Indian post at Prairie du Chien on the Mississippi, almost five hundred miles from Mackinac, and Colonel McDouall, who was now in command at the latter place, resolved to dislodge them. Accordingly, Colonel

McKay of the Michigan Fencibles was sent to Prairie du Chien with a detachment consisting of his own corps and a company of Canadian volunteers, one hundred and fifty men in all, with a 3-pounder. He also was accompanied by about five hundred Indians. The detachment reached its destination on the seventeenth of July, and found that the Americans had erected a small fort on a height behind the village, with two blockhouses mounting six pieces of cannon. The fort was manned by about seventy effective men. Lying at anchor in the river opposite the fort was a large gunboat, mounting fourteen pieces of cannon and manned by about eighty men with muskets. She was so constructed that she could be rowed in any direction without the men being exposed to the fire of musketry.

Colonel McKay demanded the immediate surrender of this formidable floating battery, which was refused, upon which he brought up his one gun and commenced a vigorous fire on the gunboat which lasted about three hours, while both gunboat and fort replied. The men in the gunboat finally, finding the place too hot for her, cut her cable and she was carried down the current to a place of shelter under an island. On the following day McKay advanced his men against the fort, upon which a white flag was immediately displayed, and the place surrendered with its garrison of sixty-five men and its cannon and stores. Not one man of McKay's white troops was even wounded in this brilliant affair, which reflected the greatest credit on every person concerned in the expedition.

The American force for the reduction of Mackinac arrived at St. Joseph on the twentieth of July. It consisted originally of five hundred regulars and two hundred and fifty militia under Lieutenant-Colonel Croghan, to which was added at Fort Gratiot, where the expedition halted, a regiment of Ohio volunteers under Colonel Cotgreave, so that the land force must have numbered more than one thousand men. They were embarked in the *Niagara*, *Caledonia*, *Lawrence*, *Scorpion* and *Tigress*, all of Perry's fleet. These vessels,

which were in charge of Commander St. Clair, carried forty-six guns throwing a broadside weighing seven hundred and seventy-six pounds, and were manned by upwards of four hundred men, so that the expedition was a formidable one in point of numbers and armament. The British post at St. Joseph had been abandoned and the Americans met with no opposition in burning the few houses there. From this place Major Holmes of the 32nd U. S. Regiment of infantry and Lieutenant Turner of the navy, with about three hundred infantry and artillery, were detached to destroy the establishment of the British North-West Company at Sault Ste. Marie. The fact that the property to be destroyed was private property, did not deter the Americans from this act of vandalism which was quite characteristic of their conduct in Canada during the war. Holmes reached Sault Ste. Marie on the twenty-first and then commenced a scene of rapine such as, fortunately for the credit of human nature, has seldom to be recorded. Mr. Johnson, the company's agent, had succeeded in carrying off a considerable amount of the company's property to a place of safety, on the approach of the enemy. The brutal rage of Holmes and his men at being thus balked of their expected prey knew no bounds. Everything they found on shore that could not be carried away was destroyed. Not only were the houses, stores and vessels burnt, but the cattle were killed, the gardens laid waste, the furniture stolen, and in some instances the clothes pilfered from the children's backs. Several of the employees of the company were carried off as prisoners. Among the acts of cruelty perpetrated by these brigands, some of which will not bear repetition, one, of which an unfortunate horse was the victim, was of peculiar atrocity. Having made use of this animal all day in carrying the plunder of the settlement, they tied him, while harnessed in the cart, to a dwelling-house which they set on fire, and amused themselves with the pitiable spectacle of the unavailing efforts of the poor beast to extricate itself from the flames. Holmes then returned to St. Joseph, and the whole expedi-

tion set out for Mackinac where others besides unarmed men and helpless women and children were to be encountered.

The American forces under St. Clair and Croghan reached Mackinac on the twenty-sixth of July, but no attempt was made to attack the place until the fourth of August. The interval seems to have been spent in reconnoitring, and in reconciling differences between St. Clair and Croghan as to the proper method of conducting the assault. It was finally decided that Croghan should land with his troops on the back or western part of the island under cover of the guns of the ships, and attempt to attack the works in the rear. Croghan and his more than one thousand men got ashore at Dowsman's farm, where there was an extensive clearing, without Colonel McDouall being able to offer any effectual opposition. This able officer was in an embarrassing position, for owing to the absence of the detachment under McKay and of Lieutenant Worsley and his seamen, after manning the guns at the forts he had only a disposable force of one hundred and forty men, of which fifty were Indians, to meet the enemy on the field. The position he took up was an excellent one behind a natural breastwork, with the ground clear in front, but it was unavoidably at too great a distance from the forts, in each of which he had been able to leave only twenty-five militia.

The enemy, guided by some former residents of the island, advanced slowly and cautiously, and McDouall's two guns a 3, and a 6-pounder opened upon them, but not with the effect they should have had, on account of the want of experienced gunners and an artillery officer to direct them. Their advance in front was checked, but they were gaining on the British left flank, the Indians who were stationed in the woods permitting them to do this without firing a shot. At the same time McDouall was obliged to weaken his small force by detaching his Michigan Fencibles to oppose a party of the enemy who were advancing to the woods on his right.

Major Crawford of the militia now sent word to Colonel McDouall that the enemy's two largest ships had anchored to the rear of his left, and that troops were moving by a road

in that direction towards the forts. He, therefore, immediately moved to place himself between the forts and the enemy, and took up a position effectually covering them. Then, collecting the greater part of the Indians who had retired, and taking with him Major Crawford and about fifty militia, he again advanced to support a party of the Indians who, with their gallant chief Thomas, had commenced a spirited attack on the enemy. These judicious arrangements effectually checked the Americans at every point, and compelled them finally to fall back in disorder to their shipping, leaving all their dead and a considerable number of their wounded on the field. The Americans admitted a loss of twelve killed, fifty-two wounded and two missing, but the return was evidently incomplete for the British found seventeen Americans dead on the island. Among them was Major Holmes, the horse-torturing hero of Sault Ste. Marie. This splendid victory, which compelled the Americans to abandon their attempt on Mackinac, was achieved with no greater loss on the part of the British than one Indian killed. The demoralized condition of the American army may be judged from the language used by Commander St. Clair in his official report to his own government, in which he says: "The men were getting lost, and falling into confusion, natural under such circumstances, which demanded an immediate retreat, or a total defeat and general massacre must have ensued."

Croghan and St. Clair now resolved to attempt an easier enterprise than the capture of Mackinac. They proceeded to the mouth of the Nautawassaga River in which the North-West Company's schooner, *Nancy*, was lying laden with furs in charge of Lieutenant Worsley with twenty-three seamen, under the protection of a blockhouse. Worsley sent away the furs in canoes which escaped the enemy and got safely into French River, and held the blockhouse, which mounted only one gun, against the twentyfold superior force of the enemy until further resistance became vain, upon which he blew up both blockhouse and vessel, and with his men escaped up the river in a boat. The expedition the sole object of

which was plunder, was, thanks to Lieutenant Worsley's energy and courage, a total failure.

St. Clair's squadron now sailed for Detroit with the exception of the schooners *Tigress* and *Scorpion* which were left to blockade the Nautawassaga, it being the only route by which provisions and other supplies could be sent to Mackinac. The Americans thus hoped to starve out the place which they could not take by assault, but this promising scheme also failed. After remaining on their station for some time, the two schooners took a cruise towards St. Joseph. On the thirty-first of August, Lieutenant Worsley arrived at Mackinac with the intelligence that the schooners were in the vicinity of St. Joseph, and five leagues apart. It was immediately resolved to attempt their capture. Accordingly on the evening of the first of September, four boats set out, one manned by nineteen seamen under Lieutenant Worsley, and the three others by sixty officers and men of the Newfoundland Regiment under Lieutenant Bulger with whom were two artillerymen with a 3 and a 6-pounder, five civilians of the Indian department and three Indian chiefs, in all ninety-two persons. A number of Indians in their canoes accompanied the expedition, but remained three miles in the rear and took no part in the fighting. At sunset on the second the boats arrived at St. Mary's Strait, and spent twenty-four hours in finding out where the American schooners were. On the third the troops remained concealed amongst the rocks all day, but at six o'clock the nearest vessel, the *Tigress*, was distinguished six miles off, and they pulled for her. At nine o'clock they were approaching her, and were within one hundred yards of the enemy when they were hailed. On receiving no answer, the Americans on the *Tigress* opened fire upon the boats, both with musketry and with the 24-pounder. The boats instantly dashed in, and in the course of five minutes the schooner was boarded and carried by the boats of Lieutenant Worsley and Lieutenant Armstrong on the starboard side, and of Lieutenant Bulger and Lieutenant Radenhurst on the port side. Of

her crew of twenty-eight men, three were killed, and five, including Mr. Champlin, her commander, dangerously wounded. The British had three seamen killed, and Lieutenant Bulger and seven soldiers slightly wounded. On the following day the prisoners were sent ashore, and the British prepared to attack the other schooner which they learned was anchored fifteen miles farther down. The position of the *Tigress* was not altered, and, the better to carry out the deception, the American flag was kept flying. On the evening of the fifth, the *Scorpion* was discovered working up to join her consort, and she came to anchor about two miles from her. At six o'clock next morning the *Tigress* slipped her cable and ran down under her jib and foresail. Everything was so well managed by Lieutenant Worsley that the *Tigress* was within ten yards of the *Scorpion* before those on board the latter discovered that anything was wrong. It was then too late. The concealed British soldiers jumped up, poured a volley into her which killed two and wounded two others, and the next moment boarded and carried the vessel, her surprised crew making no resistance. The *Scorpion* carried one long 24-pounder, besides a long 12-pounder which was in her hold, and had a complement of thirty-two men. The capture of these two schooners was a brilliant affair, and relieved the garrison of Mackinac from any further annoyance. The place remained in the hands of the British until restored to the Americans by the treaty of peace.

An account of two or three acts of American vandalism will now suffice to complete the record of their operations west of the Niagara frontier in 1814. In May, Colonel Campbell of the 19th United States infantry with five hundred troops landed at Long Point from Erie, and marched to Dover from which the few dragoons stationed there had retired. They set fire to and burnt the whole of the little village of Dover, which comprised a sawmill, a tannery, three distilleries, six stores and nineteen private houses, thus utterly ruining about twenty-five peaceable families. Per-

haps it will bring the modern Canadian reader to a clearer realization of the proceedings of these raiders to read the account of what occurred at Ryerse which was written by the venerable Mrs. Amelia Harris, cousin of the late Rev. Egerton Ryerson in whose work on the Loyalists it appears. This lady writes:—"On the fourteenth, the Americans burnt the village and mills of Dover; on the fifteenth, as my mother and myself were sitting at breakfast, the dogs kept up a very unusual barking. I went to the door to discover the cause; when I looked up I saw the hillside and fields, as far as the eyes could reach, covered with American soldiers. They had marched from Port Dover to Ryerse. Two men stepped from the ranks, selected some large chips, and came into the room where we were standing, and took coals from the hearth without speaking a word. My mother knew instinctively what they were going to do. She went out and asked to see the commanding officer. A gentleman rode up to her and said he was the person she asked for. She entreated him to spare her property and said she was a widow with a young family. He answered her civilly and respectfully, and expressed his regret that his orders were to burn, but that he would spare the house, which he did; and he said, as a sort of justification of his burning, that the buildings were used as a barrack, and the mill furnished flour for the British troops. Very soon we saw columns of dark smoke arise from every building, and of what at early morn had been a prosperous homestead, at noon there remained only smouldering ruins. My father had been dead less than two years. Little remained of all his labours excepting the orchard and the cultivated fields. It would not be easy to describe my mother's feelings as she looked upon the desolation around her, and thought upon the past and the present."

Samuel Ryerse, the husband of the lady who was thus ruined by Campbell and his band of incendiaries, was a Loyalist who was exiled for fighting on the British side during the War of the Revolution. It was not enough for his per-

secutors that he should be compelled to abandon his property and begin the world anew in a strange land, he must be pursued and his widow and little family deprived of their means of living by vandals like Campbell. This outrage provoked so much comment that the American government had to bring Colonel Campbell to trial before a court-martial which was presided over by Colonel Scott. The court declared in its finding that the destruction of the mills and distilleries was according to the usages of war, but that in burning the houses of the inhabitants, Colonel Campbell had greatly erred. This mild reprimand was all the punishment that Campbell received. Mr. James Monroe, the American secretary of state, in a letter to Sir Alexander Cochrane written in September, 1814, stated that the burning of Long Point was "unauthorized by the government." In the same letter he stated that the burning of Newark was "disavowed by the government." To "disavow" an act is to deny knowledge of it, yet General McClure was able to produce an order from War Secretary Armstrong, the proper mouthpiece of the government as regarded military matters, authorizing him to burn Newark. Mr. Monroe in making this statement to Sir Alexander Cochrane was, therefore, not telling the truth. In view of the fact that Colonel Campbell told Mrs. Ryerse that his orders were to burn, and considering the falsity of Monroe's statement about Newark, may it not be safely assumed that the burning of the private houses at Long Point was also authorized by the American government?

On the sixteenth of August, a party of about one hundred Americans and Indians landed at Port Talbot on Lake Erie, and robbed fifty families of all their horses and of every article of household furniture and wearing apparel which they possessed. The number of persons who were thus thrown destitute upon the world was two hundred and thirty-six, of whom one hundred and eighty-five were women and children. Several of the more prominent inhabitants were not only robbed but carried off as prisoners, among them

being Mr. Burwell, a member of the legislature of Upper Canada, who was at the time in a very weak state of health.

The last effort of American ruffianism in the peninsula of western Canada, was General McArthur's raid in October and November, 1814. McArthur seems to have been stimulated to this effort by the successful foray of a band of ruffians who issued from the garrison of Detroit on the twentieth of September, and spread fire and devastation through an entire Canadian settlement, bringing to utter ruin and misery twenty-seven families. McArthur's raid was on a larger and more ambitious scale. With seven hundred and fifty mounted men from Ohio and Kentucky, he left Detroit on the twenty-second of October and proceeded up the western side of Lake St. Clair, and on the twenty-sixth crossed the St. Clair River and entered Canada. The absurd Lossing by way of excuse for McArthur's conduct says the movement was made in consequence of "the critical situation of the American army under General Brown at Fort Erie," and that its object was "to make a diversion in favour of that general." As the siege of Fort Erie had been abandoned by the British a month before McArthur started, and as General Brown was not there at all but at Sacketts Harbour, his command at Fort Erie having been transferred to General Izard who had about eight thousand men with him, it will be seen that the alleged reasons for McArthur's raid did not exist. It was undertaken simply for the sake of the plunder and the cheap glory it might yield.

McArthur passed up the northern side of the Thames to Moravian Town and thence to Oxford. The country through which he advanced was given up to indiscriminate plunder, the houses of the settlers were reduced to ashes, and the miserable inhabitants were left to perish with cold and hunger. His design was to advance as far as Burlington Heights, but at the Grand River he learned that a detachment of the 103rd Regiment was after him. This news set the cowardly raider scampering back much faster than he had come, and so precipitate was his flight that the British

regulars did not get within eight miles of him. He got back to Detroit on the seventeenth of November, after three weeks of marauding in which he inflicted great loss and misery on private individuals, but did nothing for his country except to make its name detested and despised in western Canada.

CHAPTER XVIII

PLATTSBURG

It has been already seen that the American commodore, Chauncey, did not venture to leave Sacketts Harbour with his fleet until the first of August, when the completion of two large ships, the *Superior* and *Mohawk*, gave him an overwhelming preponderance of force. Thus it happened that Sir James Yeo had control of Lake Ontario for the first three months of the season of open navigation, and in that time was able to give valuable assistance to the army in the defence of Canada. The operations on the lake during the time Chauncey held possession of it were not of great importance. His fleet was greatly superior, and Sir James Yeo prudently retired with his larger vessels to Kingston, where he was blockaded by Chauncey for about six weeks. The American commodore professed a great desire for an encounter, and complained very bitterly that Sir James would not gratify him by meeting his four larger vessels with the four largest British ships. In a letter written to the secretary of the navy on the tenth of August he says: "To deprive the enemy of an apology for not meeting me I have sent ashore four guns from the *Superior* to reduce her armament in number to an equality with the *Prince Regent's*, yielding the advantage of their 68-pounders. The *Mohawk* mounts two guns less than the *Princess Charlotte*, and the *Montreal* and *Niagara* are equal to the *Pike* and *Madison*."

It is remarkable that this American commodore was unable to tell the truth even in a despatch to his own government in regard to a matter of which he must have been

fully informed. His largest vessel, the *Superior*, was heavier in armament than an ordinary 74 line of battleship, and far more powerful than the *Prince Regent* with which Chauncey compares her. The following statement of the four largest British and four largest American vessels on Lake Ontario is taken from an American author, Roosevelt, and is therefore not likely to err in favour of the British:

AMERICAN VESSELS

| Name. | Tonnage. | Crew. | Broadside Metal. | Armament. |
|-----------------------|----------|-------|------------------|--|
| <i>Superior</i> | 1,580 | 500 | 1,050 lbs. | { 30 long 32's. 2 long 24's. 26 short 42's. |
| <i>Mohawk</i> | 1,350 | 350 | 554 " | { 26 long 24's. 2 long 18's. 14 short 32's. |
| <i>Pike</i> | 875 | 300 | 360 " | { 28 long 24's. 12 long 12's. 22 short 32's. |
| <i>Madison</i> | 593 | 200 | 364 " | { 12 long 12's. 22 short 32's. |
| | 4,398 | 1,350 | 2,328 lbs. | |

BRITISH VESSELS

| Name. | Tonnage. | Crew. | Broadside Metal. | Armament. |
|--------------------------------|----------|-------|------------------|--|
| <i>Prince Regent</i> | 1,450 | 485 | 872 lbs. | { 32 long 24's. 4 short 68's. 22 short 32's. |
| <i>Princess Charlotte</i> | 1,215 | 315 | 604 " | { 26 long 24's. 2 short 68's. 14 short 32's. |
| <i>Montreal</i> | 637 | 220 | 258 " | { 7 long 24's. 18 long 18's. 2 long 12's. |
| <i>Niagara</i> | 510 | 200 | 332 " | { 20 short 32's. |
| | 3,812 | 1,220 | 1,966 lbs. | |

From the foregoing statement it will be seen that the Americans were greatly superior, both in the size of their ships and their armaments. Sir James was, therefore, wise not to risk an action, the loss of which might have wrought incalculable injury.

On Lake Champlain the Americans had been active in constructing vessels during the winter, and in April, Commodore Macdonough, who was in command there, succeeded in launching his new ships which had been built at Vergennes, Vermont. On the fourteenth of May, Captain Pring, R.N., with the British flotilla appeared off the mouth of Otter Creek, in which Macdonough's vessels were lying, and commenced a cannonade upon the seven-gun battery by which its entrance was defended. The Americans, however, were prepared for this attack; they had been strongly reinforced, and, as Captain Pring had no land force with him, he was unable to accomplish anything, and so returned to Isle Aux Noix. It was a serious error for which Sir George Prevost must be held responsible, that he did not send a sufficient land force to Vergennes at the opening of lake navigation to destroy Macdonough's ships there, and make it impossible for him to appear on Lake Champlain.

About the middle of June, General Izard, who commanded the land forces at Plattsburg, made a movement towards the Canadian frontier, his advance being encamped at Champlain within five miles of the international boundary. This movement led to no other result than a few unimportant skirmishes between parties of Americans and the British outposts. In one of these, Lieutenant-Colonel Forsyth, some of whose exploits as a marauder have already been related, was killed by an Indian. Lossing says of Forsyth's followers:—"Hotly incensed because of the employment of the savages by the British, they resolved to avenge the death of their own leader by taking the life of the leader of the Indians. A few days afterwards some of them crossed the line and shot Mahew, that leader." The leader who was shot was Captain Mailloux, a remarkably brave and vigilant Canadian officer. It is singular Lossing does not perceive that in this narrative he is showing that Forsyth's men had ceased to be soldiers and had become mere assassins, lying in ambush to take the life of a single man. Their indignation at the employment of Indians by

the British might have been somewhat lessened had they known that about the time they were lying concealed to accomplish the murder of the unfortunate Mailloux, General Brown was crossing the Niagara River to invade Canada with six hundred Indian warriors in his army.

The abdication of Bonaparte in April, 1814, which brought the long war with France to an end, enabled a considerable proportion of Wellington's victorious army to be sent to America. These troops were embarked at Bordeaux and reached Quebec, to the number of about sixteen thousand, in July and August. The hardy veterans who composed this reinforcement were ignorant of defeat. They represented the brave army which, to quote the words of Napier, "Fought and won nineteen pitched battles and innumerable combats, made or sustained ten sieges, took four great fortresses, twice expelled the French from Portugal, killed, wounded and took two hundred thousand enemies, and the bones of forty thousand British soldiers lie scattered on the mountains and plains of the peninsula." It was with the army of which this reinforcement formed a part that their trusted leader conducted to its glorious close the campaign of Vittoria of which the same brilliant historian writes: "In this campaign of six weeks Lord Wellington, with one hundred thousand men marched six hundred miles, passed six great rivers, gained one decisive battle, invested two fortresses, and drove one hundred and twenty thousand veteran troops from Spain." The result of six campaigns had proved, and every military man in Europe knew, that this army was the best in the world, its record having been an unbroken series of victories, and yet the incompetent or traitorous Sir George Prevost was able to do what its enemies could not accomplish, and bring this noble body of brave men to shame and humiliation.

The ministry in England had determined on an offensive campaign in northern New York with a view, it would appear, to conquering part of that state. Their motive seems to have been to obtain such a footing in the territory in ques-

tion as would lead to a rectification of the boundary between the United States and the British North American provinces, which had been so grossly mismanaged by the British Commissioner, Mr. Oswald, at the close of the Revolutionary War. Such an attempt was unwise, as the Duke of Wellington had pointed out more than a year before in a letter to Lord Bathurst, and it was especially unwise because the plan of invasion was arranged by a ministry more than three thousand miles away, who knew nothing of the local circumstances which might make their scheme advisable or otherwise. But the attempt having been ordered, it remained for Sir George Prevost to use the best means at his disposal to carry it out. Yet if this man had been in the pay of the enemy, he could not have arranged matters better to defeat the object of the expedition than he did. The coöperation of the fleet to command the lake was considered necessary, yet only one vessel was constructed, and the work upon her was so much delayed that she was not nearly complete when the army was ready to move. When the army did start its advance was so tardy that the enemy had full warning of the point of attack, and ample time to prepare against it.

The force selected for the invasion of New York numbered eleven thousand men, and was divided into three brigades under Generals Robinson, Power and Brisbane, the whole forming a division under the command of Major-General De Rottenburg. The army was put in motion and crossed the international boundary line at Odelltown on the first of September. This place is no more than twenty-five miles from Plattsburg, which they could easily have reached in two days, and, no doubt, could have immediately carried, as the American force was very weak, having been reduced by the sending of a large detachment under General Izard to the Niagara frontier. The moment the British began to advance, Major-General Macomb and the American troops under his command retired to Plattsburg. Sir George occupied his abandoned camp at Cham-

plain on the third, having been two days advancing somewhat less than five miles. The same snail-like rate of progression characterized the subsequent movements of Sir George. The left division, numbering about seven thousand men, advanced on the following day to the village of Chazy, about five miles from Champlain, without experiencing the slightest opposition. On the fifth, the troops halted within eight miles of Plattsburg, having advanced about seventeen miles within the enemy's territory in the course of four days. On the sixth, the army moved upon Plattsburg in two columns on parallel roads, the right column led by Major-General Power's brigade supported by four companies of light infantry, and a demi-brigade under Major-General Robinson going by the Beckmantown road. The left column, which consisted of Major-General Brisbane's brigade, advanced by the road which runs close to Lake Champlain. General Macomb had stationed a detachment of regulars with two fieldpieces near Dead Creek bridge to obstruct the left column, while General Mooers with seven hundred militia, supported by Major Wool with two hundred and fifty regulars and some artillery, was sent to check the right column on the Beckmantown road. The militia promptly ran away the moment the British appeared, or, to quote the language of their own general, Macomb, "Fell back most precipitately in the greatest disorder, notwithstanding the British troops did not deign to fire on them except by their flankers and advanced patrols."

As the flight of the panic-stricken militia, who, to quote their own general once more, "could not be prevailed upon to stand," exposed the force at Dead Creek to capture, it had to make an immediate retreat. All the American histories are filled with accounts of the brave conduct of this party of regulars and of Major Wool's men as they retreated, and of the great losses they inflicted on the British, and, no doubt, the terrified citizen soldiers of New York thought this petty skirmish to be a dreadful battle. On this point we require no better authority than General Macomb himself,

who says: "The fieldpieces did considerable execution among the enemy's columns. So undaunted however, was the enemy, that he never deployed in his whole march, always pressing on in column. Finding that every road was full of troops crowding us on all sides, I ordered the fieldpieces to retire across the bridge, and form a battery for its protection, and to cover the retreat of the infantry, which was accordingly done." The Americans retreated to the south side of the Saranac after destroying the bridge, while the British army encamped a short distance north of the river and within a mile of Plattsburg.

The position occupied by the American army at Plattsburg was on an elevated ridge of land crowned with three redoubts and two blockhouses. The redoubts were on a curved line across the neck of the peninsula between the Saranac and Lake Champlain on which the village stood, and were named respectively Forts Brown, Moreau and Scott. This neck is about one-third of a mile across. Fort Brown was on the bank of the river, half a mile above the lower bridge, and the same distance below the upper bridge. Fort Moreau, which was the principal work, was three hundred yards east of Fort Brown, and half way between the river and the lake, and Fort Scott stood near the shores of the latter. From the lower bridge to a point some distance above Fort Brown the right bank of the Saranac is steep and from fifty to sixty feet in height, and about three hundred yards above the lower bridge it is cleft by a deep ravine which extends from the river almost to the lake. Near this ravine a blockhouse was built, and on a point to the eastward overlooking Plattsburg Bay was another blockhouse. At the mouth of the river a short distance from the lower bridge stood a stone mill which was also used for defensive purposes. These works mounted altogether about twenty guns, and were defended by one thousand five hundred American regulars and three thousand two hundred militia.

Had Sir George Prevost made an attack on Plattsburg

the day his army arrived in front of it, the place would have been taken in an hour and the entire American force there captured. But this system of making war might have hurt the feelings of the enemy, whom Sir George was always so desirous of conciliating. Instead of making a prompt movement he halted his army for five days on the banks of the Saranac, and began throwing up batteries, while the Americans in full view of him were laboriously strengthening themselves in their positions. The sight of this army which a few months before had scaled the Pyrenees and driven the veteran troops of France from a position which Soult had been fortifying for three months, now halted in front of the paltry defences of Plattsburg, was certainly one which probably no other officer of the British army but Sir George Prevost would have cared to exhibit. But the natural timidity of this man steeled him effectually against all feelings of shame, and the soldiers whom he commanded could only wonder how they had fallen under such control as his.

The ostensible cause of Sir George Prevost's delay before Plattsburg was his desire for the coöperation of the fleet on the lake. This fleet was miserably weak, and its largest vessel, the *Confiance*, had only been launched on the twenty-fifth of August, and was not nearly ready for service at the time when the advance on Plattsburg commenced. Yet it was on the fitness of this ship to meet and defeat the enemy that the whole success of the campaign was made to rest. Captain Downie, who had been one of Sir James Yeo's captains on Lake Ontario, commanded the British flotilla, and Sir George states in his official despatch that immediately after his arrival at Plattsburg he requested Captain Downie's coöperation. He does not, however, state that this request for Downie's assistance was made in such terms as must have been extremely galling to that brave officer, and led him to go into action before his vessels were ready, and to make his attack rashly and even recklessly, so as to give the enemy every advantage. Sir George sent one letter to the

commander of the fleet stating that the army had long been waiting for him; that it had been under arms from daylight, the day before, in expectation of the fleet, and closing with the hope that nothing but the state of the wind prevented the fleet from coming up. The brave Downie replied that he required no urging to do his duty; that he should be up the first shift of the wind, and give the signal of his approach by scaling his guns. Captain Downie's flotilla was then lying at Isle La Motte, and a breeze that would be fair for it to come down the lake would be adverse when it sought to enter Plattsburg Bay and approach the American fleet.

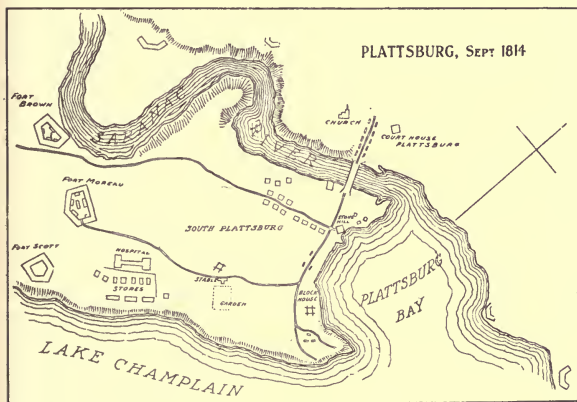
The east side of the mouth of Plattsburg Bay is formed by Cumberland Head; the entrance is about a mile and a half across, and the other boundary south-west from the Head is an extensive shoal and a small low island called Crab Island on which the Americans had a two-gun battery. Macdonough had arranged his vessels in a line extending from a point three-quarters of a mile inside of Cumberland Head to the shoal off Crab Island. The head of his line was so close to the eastern shore of Plattsburg Bay that an attempt to turn it would place the British under a very heavy fire from the battery on Cumberland Head, while the other end of the line was equally well protected by the shoal and the battery on Crab Island. The line was about a mile and a half distant from the American batteries, and, therefore, within range of their heavy long guns. Macdonough's force consisted of the ship *Saratoga*, the brig *Eagle*, the schooner *Ticonderoga*, the sloop *Preble* and ten gunboats. These vessels carried between them eighty-six guns, viz., fourteen long 24's, twelve long 18's, twelve long 12's, seven long 9's, six short 42's, twenty-nine short 32's and six short 18's, and they threw a broadside weighing one thousand one hundred and ninety-four pounds. Captain Downie's fleet consisted of the ship *Confiance*, just launched, the brig *Linnet*, the sloops *Chubb* and *Finch*, and twelve gunboats carrying eighty-seven guns, viz., thirty long 24's, five long 18's, six-

teen long 12's, five long 6's, fourteen short 32's, and seventeen short 18's. These vessels threw a broadside of one thousand one hundred and thirteen pounds. Had Captain Downie's flagship, the *Confiance*, been fully completed and properly equipped, her superiority in long guns would have made her in a seaway far more than a match for the *Saratoga*, Macdonough's largest vessel, but this superiority was wholly lost by the manner in which Downie attacked the enemy, and, as the battle was fought, the advantage was with the Americans.

On the morning of the eleventh of September, Captain Downie got his fleet under weigh, and gave the signal of his approach to Sir George Prevost by scaling his guns. Presently, as Sir George states in his despatch: "Our flotilla was seen over the isthmus which joins Cumberland Head with the mainland, steering for Plattsburg Bay." Captain Downie relied on the instant advance of the army against the works of Plattsburg, the moment his signal was given, and in haranguing his men before the engagement he said: "My lads, we shall be immediately assisted by the army ashore. Let us show them that our part of the duty is well done." Only this belief could have induced him to make the headlong attack he did, and it is safe to say that his attack would have succeeded and the American fleet been destroyed or taken had the army given their instant coöperation, as promised. But instead of doing this, the caitiff who commanded the British army, when he heard Downie's guns, ordered his men to cook, and never put them into motion at all until the fleet was entering Plattsburg Bay, so that, as the soldiers had a circuit of miles to make, they did not get within striking distance of the enemy's stronghold until nearly three hours had elapsed, and the naval engagement was at an end. Downie had been forced into an engagement under an enormous disadvantage; he had been slain and his fleet defeated, and all the larger vessels captured.

Macdonough's line of battle, as already stated, extended

across Plattsburg Bay. At its head or north-eastern end were two gunboats, each carrying one long 24-pounder and one short 18-pounder. Next to them was the brig *Eagle*, carrying eight long 12's and twelve 32-pounder carronades, and throwing a broadside of two hundred and sixty-four pounds. Behind the *Eagle* were two gunboats similar to those just described, and then came the ship *Saratoga* carrying eight long 24-pounders, six 42-pounders and twelve 32-pounder carronades and throwing a broadside which weighed four hundred and fourteen pounds. Three gunboats were in line behind the *Saratoga*, two of them similar to those to the north of her, and the third armed with one long 12-pounder. Then came the *Ticonderoga* armed with



MAP OF PLATTSBURG

four long 18's, eight long 12's and five 32-pounder carronades. This vessel's broadside weighed one hundred and eighty pounds. Behind her were three gunboats and the sloop *Preble*, the latter being under the guns of the battery on

Crab Island. Each of these gunboats carried one long 12, while the *Preble* was armed with seven long 9's and her broadside weighed thirty-six pounds. All Macdonough's larger vessels were at anchor, but the galleys were under their sweeps and their position was therefore liable to be changed. They formed a second line about forty yards back from the larger vessels. By this arrangement Macdonough's line could not be doubled upon, there was not room to anchor on his broadside out of reach of his carronades, and the British were forced to attack him by standing in bows on. Such a course involved enormous difficulty, especially with an adverse wind, and the fact that the American line could not be turned at either end, because of the land batteries which covered it, added greatly to the risk of such an attack. Downie had to assail an enemy of superior force in its own chosen position which it had improved with all the skill at its command, for Macdonough not only had provided all his vessels with springs but also with anchors to be used astern in any emergency. The *Saratoga* was further prepared for a change of wind, or for the necessity of winding ship, by having a kedge planted broad off on each of her bows with a hawser and preventer hawser hanging in bights under water leading from each quarter to the kedge on that side.

On the morning of the eleventh of September there was a light breeze from the north-east which brought the British fleet rapidly down the lake. When Captain Downie had fairly opened Plattsburg Bay he hove to with his four large vessels, and waited for his galleys to overtake him. Then he filled away on the starboard tack, and headed for the American line, the *Chubb* to the north, well to windward of the *Eagle*, for whose bows the *Linnet* was pointed, while the *Confiance* was to be laid athwart the hawse of the *Saratoga*. The *Finch* was to leeward with the gunboats and was to engage the rear of the American line. As the *Confiance* approached, the *Saratoga* opened upon her with her long 24-pounders, to which she was able to make no reply, and she suffered severely from the fire. She was also baffled

by shifting winds, and was soon so cut up by the fire of the American fleet, both her port-bow anchors being shot away and many of her crew being killed and wounded, that she was obliged to port her helm and come to while still nearly a quarter of a mile distant from the *Saratoga*. Captain Downie came to anchor in good style, securing everything carefully before he fired a gun, and then opening with a terribly destructive broadside. The *Chubb* and *Linnet* stood farther in and anchored forward of the *Eagle's* beam. The *Eagle* got abreast of the *Ticonderoga* under her sweeps supported by the larger gunboats, five in number. The smaller British gunboats held aloof from close fighting throughout the action, and thereby destroyed any chance Downie might have had of winning the battle.

The battle naturally divided itself into two combats, the van one between the *Chubb*, *Linnet* and *Confiance* on the British side, and the *Eagle*, *Saratoga* and seven gunboats on the American side; and the rear combat between the *Finch*, with the British gunboats, and the *Ticonderoga* and *Preble*, and three American gunboats, aided by the two-gun battery on Crab Island. The *Confiance* carried twenty-seven long 24's and eight short 32's and her broadside weight of metal was four hundred and thirty-two pounds. The *Linnet* carried sixteen long 12's and threw a broadside weighing ninety-six pounds. The *Chubb* carried ten short 18's and one long 6, and threw ninety-six pounds. The *Finch* carried seven short 18's, four long 6's and threw a broadside of eighty-four pounds. The five British gunboats which took an active part in the engagement carried two long 24's, three long 18's and two 32-pounder carronades. The force arrayed in each of these combats, was therefore as follows:—

VAN COMBAT

| AMERICAN. | | BRITISH. | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| | Weight of Broadside: | | Weight of Broadside. |
| <i>Eagle</i> | 246 lbs. | <i>Chubb</i> | 96 lbs. |
| <i>Saratoga</i> | 414 " | <i>Linnet</i> | 96 " |
| Seven gunboats | 246 " | <i>Confiance</i> | 432 " |
| | <hr/> 942 lbs. | | <hr/> 624 lbs. |

REAR COMBAT

| AMERICAN | | BRITISH. | |
|------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|---------|
| Weight of Broadside. | | Weight of Broadside. | |
| <i>Ticonderoga</i> | 180 lbs. | <i>Finch</i> | 84 lbs. |
| <i>Preble</i> | 36 " | Five gunboats | 166 " |
| Three gunboats | 36 " | | |
| <hr/> 252 lbs. | | <hr/> 250 lbs. | |

It will be seen from the foregoing statement that in the van combat there was a preponderance of more than one-half against the British in weight of metal, while in the rear combat the forces arrayed against each other were nearly equal. But the manner in which the American rear was covered by the two-gun battery on Crab Island gave them a very great advantage. It was at this end of the line that the British experienced their first reverse at an early stage of the combat. The *Finch*, in manœuvring to close on the *Ticonderoga*, struck on the shoal which extends out from Crab Island, and grounded in such a position that she became helpless. The guns on the Crab Island battery opened upon her, and she was raked by the *Ticonderoga* so that she was finally compelled to haul down her flag. The five British gunboats under Lieutenant Bell now forced the *Preble* out of the line, compelling her to cut her cable and drift inshore out of the fight. They then made a very determined attack on the *Ticonderoga*, and had they succeeded in capturing her the day would have been won for the British, but after a severe struggle they were repulsed, being much over-matched in weight of metal.

In the meantime the fighting at the head of the line had been severe. The *Confiance*, although her equipment was so imperfect that she was quite unfit for an engagement, was most gallantly fought, but it was among the most serious disasters of that fatal day that Captain Downie should have been killed almost at the beginning of the action. The *Chubb* and *Linnet*, at the extreme end of the line, were excellently fought, but the former had her cable, bowsprit and

main boom shot away and drifted within the American lines and was captured. The *Linnet* although of only about one-third the force of the *Eagle*, fairly defeated that vessel and shot away her springs so that she came up in the wind. This compelled her commander to cut his cable, run down and anchor by the stern, between the *Ticonderoga* and the *Confiance*, from which position he opened on the latter. The *Linnet* now directed her attention to the American gunboats at that end of the line, finally driving them off, and springing her broadside so as to rake the *Saratoga* on her bows.

The *Confiance*, although so heavily overmatched by the gunboats and the *Saratoga*, had succeeded in wholly disabling and dismounting the entire starboard battery of the latter vessel. The battle would have been won but for the provision which Macdonough had made for swinging his ship. When all his starboard guns had been silenced, he succeeded in getting the *Saratoga* round so that he was able to open with his port battery on the *Confiance*. The latter also attempted to round but having only springs to rely on her efforts did little beyond forcing her forward, and she hung with her head to the wind. She had lost one-half of her crew, most of her guns on the engaged side were dismounted, and her stout masts had been splintered until they looked like bundles of matches, her sails had been torn to rags and she was forced to strike about two hours and a half after she had fired the first broadside. The *Linnet*, commanded by the gallant Captain Pring, maintained the unequal fight for about fifteen minutes longer, and only struck when the water had risen a foot above her lower deck. Then the plucky little brig hauled down her colours, and the fight ended about three hours after the first shot had been fired. The galleys that had been engaged with the *Ticonderoga* rowed away and escaped with the other seven, under Lieutenant Rayot, which had held aloof from the action. The American vessels were all too much disabled to follow them. The American loss in this action was about two hundred and that of the

British considerably more, probably about two hundred and seventy.

Sir James Yeo's comment upon this action in his letter to Mr. Crocker easily discloses the cause of the failure of Captain Downie's attack. "It appears to me, and I have good reason to believe," said he, "that Captain Downie was urged and his ship hurried into action before he was in a fit state to meet the enemy. I am also of the opinion that there was not the least necessity for our squadron giving the enemy such decided advantages by going into their bay to engage them. Even had they been successful, it would not in the least have assisted the troops in storming the batteries; whereas had our troops taken their batteries first, it would have obliged the enemy's squadron to quit the bay and give ours a fair chance." Captain Macdonough's elaborate preparations for defence would have been of no avail had Captain Downie anchored his vessels out of carronade range and kept pounding the enemy with his long guns. Or if a headlong attack had to be made, Captain Downie should have thrown his entire force on the windward end of the American line, leaving to the enemy's vessels to leeward the difficult or impossible task of working up to windward to the assistance of their comrades.

Sir George Prevost states in his despatch that his batteries opened on the enemy the instant the ships engaged. He also says: "I immediately ordered that part of the brigade under Major-General Robinson which had been brought forward, consisting of our light infantry companies, third battalion 27th and 76th Regiments, and Major-General Power's brigade, consisting of the 3rd, 5th, and the first battalion of the 27th and 58th Regiments, to force the fords of the Saranac, and advance provided with scaling-ladders to escalate the enemy's works, when I had the mortification to hear the shout of victory from the enemy's works in consequence of the British flag being lowered on board the *Confiance* and *Linnet*, and to see our gunboats seeking their safety in flight. This unlooked-for event deprived me of the coöpera-

tion of the fleet, without which the further prosecution of the service became impracticable. I did not hesitate to arrest the course of the troops advancing to the attack, because the most complete success would have been unavailing, and the possession of the enemy's works offered no advantage to compensate for the loss we must have sustained in acquiring possession of them."

So much for Sir George Prevost's reasons for his disgraceful retreat which excited the keenest feeling of indignation among all the officers and men of the army which he commanded. Major-General Robinson, a brave Loyalist officer, who had served under Wellington at St. Sebastian, Vittoria, Nive, Orthes, and Toulouse, protested against the order of his military superior to retreat, because from the position of his troops he was of the opinion that his loss of men would be greater in a retreat than in an advance upon the American works. Major-General Brisbane offered to cross the Saranac in force and carry the enemy's works in twenty minutes. But nothing could move this miserable general to take a manly stand. Having forced Captain Downie into an action for which he was not prepared, and having induced him under false representations to make a headlong and rash attack, he now made his own failure to coöperate and the disaster which resulted from his own misconduct, the pretext for a dishonourable and disgraceful retreat from before an enemy in every way inferior.

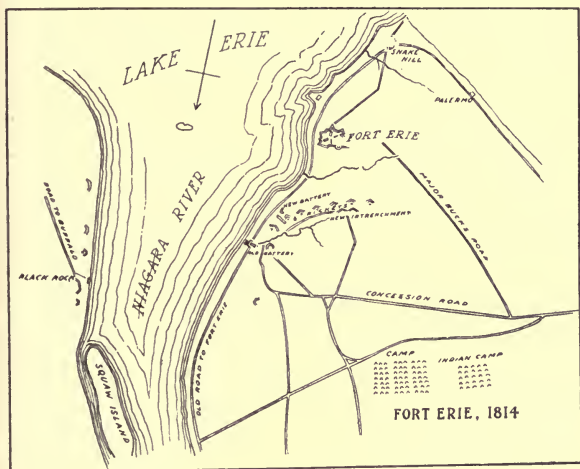
Sir George Prevost retreated from Plattsburg with his army on the night after the battle on the lake. What was thought of this retreat at the time, both by Canadians and Americans, may be gathered from the following extract from a pamphlet written by a gentleman who resided near the scene of action. This writer says: "It is a fact that the American commodore was so impressed with the idea that their works on shore would still be carried, that he did not take possession of our vessels for a long time after the action terminated; he being employed in getting his own out of reach of guns from the shore, apprehending that their own batteries

would be turned against them. In the evening he expressed an expectation that the British colours would be seen flying upon the American works, and when General Macomb came off at daylight to say that our army had retreated in the night of the eleventh, leaving their sick and wounded behind and destroying quantities of stores and provisions Commodore Macdonough would not credit the fact; but when it was persisted in, cautioned Macomb to beware of a *ruse de guerre*, as the British army would either return next night, or was then proceeding by forced marches to Sacketts Harbour. It is known that Macomb, notwithstanding all his puffs about our defeat, was actually sitting in gloomy despair upon a gun while our troops were advancing upon the eleventh, and was ready to surrender the moment that the first British soldier appeared upon the parapet. And when he was notified that they had suddenly halted and were then on the retreat, he started up, almost frantic with joy, and could hardly believe the evidence of his senses. He had only with him about one thousand five hundred of the refuse of the American troops on the Plattsburg duty, the effectives having previously marched off for Sacketts Harbour under General Izard. To this may be added perhaps three thousand militia chiefly collected after Sir George halted on the sixth, at Plattsburg, and on which day he might have entered their works almost without opposition had our troops not been kept back for a grand coup, and behold its finale!"

The total loss of the British army in the operations from the sixth to the fourteenth of September inclusive amounted to thirty-seven killed, one hundred and fifty wounded, and fifty-five missing, a grand total of two hundred and thirty-five. This return is a complete answer to all the absurd stories that have been published by Lossing, and other American historians of the war, in regard to the desperate fighting of Macomb's regulars and militia. The greater part of the British did not encounter the American troops at all, and there was at no time anything like a severe contest. The troops were so disquieted and dispirited by the manner in

which they had been treated by their commander that a great many of them deserted on the retreat, a fact which Sir George was able to conceal in his official letter by dating it on the day of the naval battle, although it was written several days later at Montreal, whither he had retired leaving his army distributed between Isle Aux Noix, St. Johns, Chambly, and La Prairie. Thus ended the Plattsburg campaign.

After the failure of the assault on Lake Erie, Lieutenant-General Drummond continued to besiege that fortress, which



FORT ERIE AND THE BATTLE OF SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1814

was daily being strengthened by the labour of the garrison. The British were reinforced by the arrival of the 6th and 82nd Regiments, whose united strength was about one thousand one hundred rank and file, but the departure of the six companies of the 41st Regiment for Fort George and of what was left of the 103rd for Burlington Heights, left him

but little stronger in numbers than he had been before the assault, and in effective strength much weaker, owing to the prevalence of typhoid fever among the troops, caused by the heavy and constant rains and the low and swampy nature of the ground on which they were encamped. The Americans had been heavily reinforced, and largely outnumbered the British, so that the novel spectacle was presented of a British army besieging a larger American army in a fort which was open to the lake which the Americans still commanded, and which therefore could be reinforced at any time from Buffalo, as fast as troops were collected. The Americans had taken the precaution of protecting their flanks, after the capture of the *Ohio* and *Somers*, by anchoring four armed brigs of Perry's fleet and a schooner on the lake opposite Fort Erie. Yet with all these advantages General Brown did not consider himself safe and insisted on being reinforced by Izard's command from Lake Champlain.

The impossibility of the British army being readily reinforced from Kingston, owing to the command of Lake Ontario having passed for the time to Chauncey, and the weak state to which his force had been reduced by sickness, determined Drummond to remove his troops to a healthier position. News of this intention of the British general reached Brown by means of deserters, and at the same time came the news of the Plattsburg affair. At this juncture, Brown was reinforced by the arrival of upwards of two thousand volunteers under General Porter. All these favourable circumstances occurring at the same time induced the American general, who on the tenth of September had been writing imploring letters to Izard in which he said, "I consider the fate of this army very doubtful unless speedy relief is afforded," to make a grand sortie against the British works and thereby gain the credit of compelling Drummond to raise the siege. This plan was carried out on the afternoon of the seventeenth of September, when General Brown knew that De Watteville's Regiment would be doing duty at the batteries. These batteries were distant a mile and a half from the British camp

and situated in the midst of a thick woods. Three of them were armed with cannon, but a fourth which had been commenced and which was intended to enfilade the western ramparts of the American works, had not been completed owing to the want of guns with which to arm it. The active batteries were numbered 1, 2 and 3 respectively, beginning at the British left and going towards their right.

Shortly after noon General Porter with his volunteers, more than two thousand in number, and parts of four regiments of regular infantry, advanced through the woods by a circuitous route which had been previously marked, and which placed them within pistol shot of the British right battery, No. 3, without their being discovered. About the



MEDAL STRUCK IN HONOUR OF GENERAL RIPLEY

same time Brigadier-General James Miller with three regiments of infantry moved, by way of a ravine which concealed his troops, to attack the British centre. He was supported by the 21st Regiment under General Ripley acting as a reserve. The advance was made under cover of a heavy fire from the American batteries, and it was greatly favoured by

a thick fog which concealed the enemy's approach. At three o'clock Porter's men rushed from the woods in which they were hidden and attacked the British right, while Miller's column penetrated the British centre, a little to the right of battery No. 2. Being in overwhelming numbers and the attack being a complete surprise, the opposition they met with was comparatively slight. Miller's column turned to the left and succeeded in surrounding the British right then briskly engaged with Porter's men, and obtained possession of battery No. 3. The small blockhouse behind it, garrisoned by a few men of the 8th Regiment, was also captured after a severe struggle. The three guns in the battery were immediately destroyed and the magazine blown up.

The Americans now turned to the right and attacked the centre British battery No. 2. This also was carried, as well as the blockhouse behind it, after a very gallant resistance made by the weak detachment composed of a part of the 8th and of De Watteville's Regiment by which it was defended. Miller was at this time joined by his reserve and he continued his advance to the right for the purpose of attacking battery No. 1. His attack on this work, however, failed, for the arrival of reinforcements from the camp brought the short-lived success of Porter and Miller to a sudden end. The moment the alarm was given, the Royal Scots, with the 89th as a support, moved by the new road and met and engaged the enemy near the captured blockhouse in the rear of No. 3 battery, and checked their further progress in that direction. That gallant Canadian regiment, the Glengarry Light Infantry, advanced by the centre road, and, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Battersby, attacked the enemy's forces in the new intrenchments and drove them out of them. At the same moment seven companies of the 82nd Regiment under Major Procter, and three companies of the 6th under Major Taylor, the whole numbering less than six hundred rank and file, were detached to the left to support batteries 1 and 2. The latter had fallen into the hands of the enemy before this reinforcement arrived, but Miller's strong column was im-

mediately attacked by Taylor's and Procter's men with the bayonet with such intrepid bravery that the Americans were not only forced back from No. 1 battery, but driven out of No. 2 with such haste that they had no time to destroy it or damage its guns to any considerable extent. The Americans sought safety in flight, leaving a number of prisoners and many of their wounded in the hands of the British. They were pursued almost to the glacis of Fort Erie, and by



A BRONZE TABLET RECENTLY ERECTED IN BUFFALO TO COMMEMORATE THE BATTLES OF LAKE ERIE, CHIPPAWA, LUNDY'S LANE AND FORT ERIE

five o'clock all the intrenchments were again occupied by the British, and the line of pickets established as it had been previous to the enemy's attack.

In this affair the Americans had upwards of four thousand men engaged, about one-half volunteers, and the remainder regulars belonging to eight regiments of infantry and rifles, besides dismounted dragoons and engineers. The momentary possession they obtained of two of the British batteries caused

them to proclaim this sortie as a victory, conveniently ignoring the easy manner in which they were afterwards driven out of these same batteries by a very inferior force of British regulars. The Americans give their loss as five hundred and ten, of whom eighty were killed and four hundred and thirty wounded or missing. This return, however, does not appear to include the losses of the volunteers. The British lost six hundred and nine men, of whom one hundred and fifteen were killed, one hundred and seventy-eight wounded, and three hundred and sixteen missing. Nearly two-thirds of this loss fell on the detachment of the 8th and De Watteville's Regiment stationed at the batteries where the attack was made. The latter regiment alone lost two hundred and sixty-four men, a greater number than was killed, wounded and missing in the entire British army in the Plattsburg campaign.

On the evening of the twenty-first of September, four days after this sortie, General Drummond carried out his previously formed resolution of abandoning the siege of Fort Erie. He removed his guns and stores and retired with his force to a position a couple of miles from his former encampment. There he remained until the afternoon of the following day, when as the Americans made no movement from Fort Erie, he leisurely withdrew to Frenchman's Creek a couple of miles farther. On the twenty-fourth he encamped at General Riall's old quarters at Chippawa, having previously destroyed the bridge over Frenchman's Creek and established a cavalry picket there.

In the meantime General Izard, with about four thousand men, had been advancing from Lake Champlain towards the Niagara frontier. He arrived at Sacketts Harbour on the seventeenth of September, and on the twenty-first embarked with two thousand five hundred infantry in Chauncey's fleet, leaving his cavalry and artillery to go by land. Izard landed his men at the mouth of the Genesee River, and marched them to Lewiston, which he reached on the fifth of October. The British camp on the other side of the Niagara River was in sight, but Izard was in no haste to attack it. It was not

until the eleventh that he crossed at Black Rock and took command of all the forces about Fort Erie. He was now at the head of an army numbering more than eight thousand men, and had, therefore, about three times the force of General Drummond. When Izard advanced towards Chippawa the latter prudently retired upon Fort George and Burlington. The only affair that grew out of Izard's advance was a combat which took place on the morning of the nineteenth at Cook's Mills on Lyon's Creek between six hundred and fifty men of the 82nd, 100th and Glengarry Regiments under Colonel Myers, and General Bissel's brigade about one thousand four hundred strong, comprising the 5th, 14th, 15th and 16th Regiments of United States regular infantry, a company of



A MEDAL PREPARED ABOUT 1815 BY THE LOYAL AND PATRIOTIC SOCIETY BUT NEVER DISTRIBUTED

riflemen, and a squadron of dragoons. The thickness of the woods prevented the action being decisive, but in point of loss the Americans suffered most. The Americans had twelve men killed, fifty-four wounded and one man taken prisoner. The British loss in killed and wounded was nineteen. The rough handling which his men received in the affair did not encourage General Izard to attempt any further movement. On the following day he fell back to Fort Erie.

General Izard's retreat was hastened by the arrival of a reinforcement for General Drummond, consisting of five companies of the 90th Regiment which with a supply of provisions for the army had been landed by the British fleet at Burlington on the nineteenth. Sir James Yeo had once more the command of the lake. His large two-decker the *St. Lawrence* had been completed, and his adversary Chauncey, believing with Falstaff that "the better part of valour is discretion," had retired with his fleet to Sacketts Harbour. Sir James Yeo had left Kingston on the seventeenth with these troops and supplies; on the twenty-third he was back at Kingston, and on the first of November he sailed from thence with the 37th Regiment, recruits for the 6th and 82nd Regiments and a brigade of artillery. These were disembarked at Fort George on the evening of the second. General Izard was very prompt to take the hint conveyed by the arrival of this small reinforcement. His whole army crossed the Niagara River at the Black Rock Ferry and abandoned Canada. On the fifth of November the works of Fort Erie were blown up and laid in ruins, and the farcical pretence, which had been kept up for more than three months, of desperately holding a few acres of Canadian ground was brought to a sudden end. After three campaigns Canada had proved too tough a subject for the Americans, and its suffering people were left in peace.

It had been expected that Sir George Prevost, with so large a force at his disposal, would have made an attack on Sacketts Harbour for the purpose of destroying the American fleet there. But no attempt of this kind was made; the war was over, so far as Canada was concerned, and as soon as lake navigation closed the armies on both sides went into winter quarters. Very elaborate plans were formed during the winter for a vigorous prosecution of the contest when the spring opened, but the time for their realization never came. Before the snows of winter had melted peace had been proclaimed and all fears of another invasion were at an end.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CAPTURE OF WASHINGTON

HAVING brought the narrative of the events in Canada to a close, it now only remains to deal briefly with the naval and military occurrences on the ocean, and seaboard of the United States from the beginning of 1814 to the end of the war. During the whole of this year so strict a blockade was maintained by the British along the entire American coast, that very few of the enemy's vessels got to sea. It was only when the blockading vessels were driven off their cruising ground by severe weather that the blockaded warships were able to slip out and make their way to some distant sea where they could prey on British commerce.

In 1813, the American frigate *Essex*, commanded by Captain David Porter, entered the Pacific and captured a number of British whalers. In January, 1814, she was anchored in the harbour of Valparaiso in company with one of her prizes which had been armed and named the *Essex Junior*. Here she was blockaded for seven weeks by the British frigate *Phæbe*, Captain Hillyar, and the 24-gun ship *Cherub*. The following statement shows the comparative force of these vessels:—

| BRITISH | | AMERICAN | |
|---|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| | Weight of broadside. | | Weight of broadside. |
| <i>Phæbe</i> , 26 long 18's 14 short 32's 2 long 12's 2 long 9's 2 short 18's | } 497 lbs. | <i>Essex</i> , 40 short 32's 6 long 12's | } 675 lbs. |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| <i>Cherub</i> , 18 short 32's 4 short 18's 2 long 9's | } 342 lbs. | <i>Essex Junior</i> , 10 short 18's 10 long 6's | } 120 lbs. |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | 839 lbs. | | 795 lbs. |

It will be seen from this statement that in weight of metal there was very little difference between the British and American vessels, but the British were greatly superior in long gun metal. On the twenty-eighth of March the *Essex* tried to escape, but, having her mainmast carried away in a squall, was compelled to anchor near the shore where she was attacked by the *Phæbe* and *Cherub* and forced to surrender. Captain Hillyar coolly selected his own distance and pounded the *Essex* to pieces with his long guns, just as Captain Downie might have done on Lake Champlain. The loss of the *Essex* was one hundred and eleven killed and wounded. Both the British vessels lost but five killed and ten wounded between them.

On the twenty-ninth of April the American corvette *Peacock*, Captain Warrington, captured the British brig *Epervier*, after an engagement which lasted three-quarters of an hour. The *Peacock* was much the superior vessel as the following comparison will show:—

| | No. of broadside guns. | Weight of metal. | Crew. |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|-------|
| <i>Peacock</i> | 11 | 338 lbs. | 166 |
| <i>Epervier</i> | 9 | 274 " | 118 |

The British vessel had twenty-three killed and wounded, the loss of the *Peacock* was only two men. The gunnery of the *Epervier* seems to have been very bad.

On the twenty-eighth of June, the United States corvette, *Wasp*, captured the British brig, *Reindeer*, after a desperate engagement. The comparative force of these vessels was as follows:—

| | Broadside guns. | Weight of metal. | No. of men. |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|
| <i>Wasp</i> | 11 | 338 | 173 |
| <i>Reindeer</i> | 10 | 210 | 118 |

The *Reindeer* lost sixty-seven in killed and wounded, the *Wasp* twenty-three. The action was one of the most stubbornly contested of the whole war.

On the first of September the *Wasp* fought a night engagement with the British brig *Avon* and reduced her to a sink-

In the early part of 1815 there were four affairs on the ocean, which will be most conveniently disposed of here. The first of these was the capture off Madeira of the *Cyane* and *Levant* by the United States frigate *Constitution* on the twentieth of February. Their armament as compared with the *Constitution* was as follows:—

The *Constitution* carried four hundred and fifty men; the two British vessels had three hundred and twenty men between them. While there is an apparent equality in the weight of metal, there was in reality an enormous disparity of force, for, to say nothing of the superior thickness of her sides, a fast and weatherly frigate like the *Constitution* could keep her own distance out of reach of the short guns of the *Cyane* and *Levant* and destroy them both. The *Levant* was afterwards recaptured by a British squadron.

On the fifteenth of January the United States frigate *President*, Captain Decatur, was captured by a British squadron consisting of the razee *Majestic*, and the frigates *Endymion*, *Pomona* and *Tenedos*, off Sandy Hook. The *President* was first overtaken and engaged by the *Endymion*, and this powerful frigate would no doubt have captured the American ship unaided, but for the arrival of her consorts to whom

Decatur preferred to surrender. The capture of the *President* was a fortunate event for it enabled the British naval officers to show their countrymen the kind of marine monsters, misnamed frigates, against which the *Guerrière*, *Macedonian*, and *Java* had been rashly sent to contend.

On the twenty-third of March the United States corvette *Hornet* captured the British brig *Penguin* in the south Atlantic. The American vessel was superior both in weight of metal and number of men, and the defence of the British brig seems to have been impaired by the early fall of her captain.

On the thirtieth of June, several months after peace had been proclaimed, the *Peacock* encountered the East India Company's cruiser *Nautilus* off the port of Anjier. The commander of the *Nautilus*, Lieutenant Boyce, sent his purser, Mr. Bartlett, in one of his boats to inform Captain Warrington of the peace. This officer, instead of acting on the information thus given, immediately confined Mr. Bartlett below and advanced on the *Nautilus*. Lieutenant Boyce then hailed him to ask if he knew that peace had been declared. Warrington demanded that the *Avon's* colours be hauled down, and on this being refused fired a couple of broadsides into the little vessel, which killed seven men, including her first-lieutenant, and wounded eight. The *Nautilus* which was less than one-third the force of the *Peacock*, then struck her colours. Warrington, having satisfied his thirst for murder by the slaying of seven men, instantly gave up the *Nautilus* with many hypocritical apologies and offers of assistance. To shield himself against the storm of indignation which his conduct had provoked, he pretended that Mr. Bartlett, who was sent expressly to notify him of the peace, did not deliver his message, a story so absurdly and shamelessly false that it would be an insult to the intelligence of the reader to notice it further.

This year, for the first time, the American people began to realize the full significance of the war upon which they had so rashly entered. Hitherto the people of the sea-coast towns had only heard of it from a distance, now it was brought

to their own doors, and its effects were experienced by every man, woman and child in the country. The foreign trade of the United States had practically ceased to exist, and universal bankruptcy was threatened. The revenues had greatly fallen off in spite of the new and previously unknown forms of taxation that had been introduced, and the government was in great distress for lack of money. Loans could only be made at a ruinous rate of discount, and finally the prospect became so dark that they could not be made at all. The last loan attempted, for \$25,000,000, which was offered in March, 1814, was less than half taken up and that on terms so unfavourable that the government was compelled to resort to the issue of treasury notes, which presently fell in value twenty-five per cent., while the army bills of Canada were at a premium.

The first land operation undertaken by the British on the coast during the year was directed against Moose Island, or Eastport, in the state of Maine. On the eleventh of July, Lieutenant-Colonel Pilkington and Captain Sir Thomas Hardy with H. M. S. *Ramillies* and two transports, bearing six hundred men of the 102nd Regiment, arrived at Eastport from Shelburne, N.S., and summoned Major Putnam, who commanded at Fort Sullivan, to surrender. This officer was allowed just five minutes to make up his mind. He declined to surrender, upon which the troops were placed in the boats, but before they had reached the shore the flag of the fort was hauled down, and on their landing a capitulation was agreed to. Thus Moose Island and the islands adjacent, together with Fort Sullivan and its garrison of eighty men, fell into the hands of the British without any loss of life. In the fort were found ten guns, six of them mounted, and a considerable quantity of ammunition and small arms. Eastport remained in our possession until three years after the end of the war, and during that period enjoyed a brisk trade.

No two states of the union had been more zealous advocates of the war than Maryland and Virginia, which between them had a population of nearly a million and a half of souls, of

whom more than half a million were slaves. Virginia was the home of Jefferson to whose anti-British feeling the war was mainly due, and it was the native state of Henry Clay, whose inflammatory harangues in Congress and political intrigues had led to hostilities between the two nations. It was therefore but natural and proper that Maryland and Virginia, as the main supports of this unnecessary contest, should be made to experience some of its worst effects. It might have been supposed that in these states, where patriotism appeared to be at such a fever heat, and which claimed to be the seats of chivalry and courage, there would have been some notable displays of daring in the field, but it seemed that the men of Virginia and Maryland were only good at fighting with their tongues and pens. In this they resembled those favourite sons of Virginia, Jefferson and Madison. They could talk bravely of war when it was at a distance, but when it came near their own doors they could think of nothing but flight. Jefferson was always a timid man, as his conduct in 1781, when Virginia, of which he was then governor, was invaded by Arnold and Simcoe, conclusively proved, and Madison showed himself the same when Virginia and the district of Columbia were invaded in 1814.

Vice-Admiral Cockburn had long cherished the design of capturing Washington, and by his experience with the militia of Virginia and Maryland in the course of his operations in Chesapeake Bay, he was strengthened in the belief that this could be accomplished. The American government had early been informed of the probability of an attack on their capital, and its defence had been entrusted to General Winder and a body of militia and regulars. In view of the threatened invasion a requisition was made on the several states for ninety-three thousand men, of whom Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, the states lying nearest to Washington, were to contribute thirty-two thousand. These troops were to be embodied and held for immediate service, and it was intended that fifteen thousand of them should be kept at Washington for the defence of the seat of government.

On the fourteenth of August Vice-Admiral Cochrane, with a fleet having on board a land force under Major-General Ross, joined Vice-Admiral Cockburn in Chesapeake Bay. The direct route to Washington was up the Potomac River to Port Tobacco, which is about fifty miles from its mouth, and thence overland thirty-two miles farther by the village of Piscataway to the lower bridge across the eastern branch of the Potomac. The width of the river at this point, and the prospect of its being defended by vessels of war and a body of troops on the opposite bank, induced Ross and Cockburn to adopt the other route by way of the Patuxent. Accordingly the main body of the British advanced to this river, while Captain Gordon of the *Seahorse*, 38, the frigate *Euryalus*, 36, three bomb vessels and a rocket ship, moved up the Potomac to attack Fort Washington, which was about fourteen miles below the capital. At the same time Sir Peter Parker, with the frigate, *Menelaus*, 38, was sent up the Chesapeake above Baltimore to make a demonstration in that quarter.

The defence of the upper waters of Chesapeake Bay had been confided by the American government to Commodore Barney, an officer who had been in the service of the French Directory. He had under his command a flotilla of fourteen gunboats, each carrying one or two long 32, 24, or 18-pounders, according to the size of the vessel. The aggregate crews of this flotilla numbered about seven hundred men. The Americans had expected great results from this little fleet, but they were disappointed. Barney had retired with his vessels into the Patuxent, and as the British advanced up that river he continued to retreat. Finally on the twenty-second of August, when the British were close at hand, the flotilla which was at Pig Point was destroyed by orders from Washington. The British were advancing up the river in barges when Barney's much vaunted fleet was blown up and the crews who had manned it fled. They joined Winder's army which was charged with the defence of Washington.

While Rear-Admiral Cockburn was pursuing the American

flotilla with his seamen and marines, the army had been landed at Benedict, on the western bank of the Patuxent about fifty miles from Washington, and had marched by Nottingham to Upper Marlborough where it arrived on the afternoon of the same day that the flotilla was destroyed. On the following day the troops were joined by Cockburn and his marines. Washington was but sixteen miles distant, and it was determined to make a bold dash for it, trusting to daring and activity rather than to numbers. That evening, the twenty-third, the British forces which numbered about four thousand men, advanced and bivouacked for the night at Melwood, ten miles from Washington, near the junction of the roads leading to that city and to Alexandria Ferry. The American army under Winder which the previous night had encamped at Long Old Fields, less than three miles away, was now lying across the eastern branch of the Potomac within the limits of the Federal city.

There was great alarm in Washington that night, President Madison, Secretary of State Monroe and War Secretary Armstrong, who could so lightly sanction the invasion of Canada and destruction of Newark, were in a dreadful state of perturbation. General Winder was fairly distracted, for every one from the president down was tendering him advice. Both Monroe and Armstrong had served in the Revolutionary War, and both believed themselves competent to command an army. Yet there was something ludicrous in the state of utter helplessness to which this warlike government had been reduced by the appearance of four thousand British troops. On the morning of the twenty-fourth of August, General Winder and the members of the administration were in council at his headquarters when intelligence came that the British were marching in the direction of Bladensburg, which is on the eastern branch of the Potomac, six miles from Washington. Up to that moment President Madison and his advisers had believed that Ross would either turn towards Fort Washington, or march against the capital by the eastern bridge, which being half a mile in length,

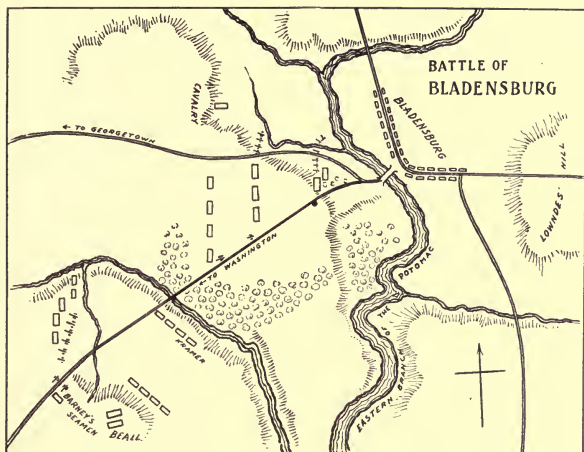
would have enabled Madison, Monroe and Armstrong to emulate Horatius Cocles and his undaunted companions in defending their city in full view of its entire population, slaves included. General Ross did not choose so far to gratify the American Cabinet, a circumstance which made necessary an instant change of plans on their part. The troops in Washington were immediately hurried off towards Bladensburg. Secretary Monroe was sent in advance of them to assist General Stansbury, whose brigade was already at Bladensburg, to post his troops. General Winder and his staff followed, and lastly came War Secretary Armstrong, the president and the attorney-general, all on horseback, and anxious to take a conspicuous part in the warlike spectacle about to be displayed.

The army under General Winder, according to American accounts, numbered seven thousand six hundred men, of whom six thousand five hundred and forty were at Bladensburg. Of these more than four thousand were Maryland militia and volunteers; one thousand two hundred and forty were regulars of the army, or seamen and marines; more than one thousand one hundred were district of Columbia militia, and about one hundred were Virginia dragoons. Bladensburg lies at the head of small craft navigation on the eastern branch of the Potomac, the river being crossed by a bridge about one hundred feet long, which formed a part of the old post-road from Washington to Baltimore. Another road from Georgetown joined the Washington road at an acute angle a few yards from the bridge. In the triangular space formed by these two roads, the Americans of Stansbury's command, who had been stationed at Bladensburg, were posted on the morning of the twenty-fourth of August. On the brow of a little eminence, three hundred yards from the bridge, was an earthwork which was occupied by the artillery companies from Baltimore under Captains Myers and Magruder, one hundred and fifty strong with six 6-pounders. On the right of the battery, near the junction of the roads and concealed by the bushes on the low ground near the

river, Pinkney's Baltimore riflemen, one hundred and fifty in number, were posted. In the rear of the battery were two companies of Maryland militia, acting as riflemen. These were flanked by Captain Doughty's riflemen. Four hundred yards behind the battery were Sterrett's 5th Regiment of Baltimore volunteers, five hundred strong, and the Maryland regiments of Ragan and Schultz, one thousand three hundred in number. Somewhat in the rear, on the extreme left, were the cavalry, five hundred and thirty all told, one hundred and forty of them regulars. Between Sterrett's and the cavalry on the left were Burch's artillery with four guns. In the turnpike road, at a distance of five hundred and eight hundred yards from the river, Colonel Wadsworth had placed two fieldpieces which completely commanded the highway.

About one thousand four hundred yards from the Bladensburg bridge is a ravine, which the road crosses by means of a small bridge. On the rising land behind this, General Winder placed a third line of troops. Colonel Kramer's Maryland battalion was posted in front above the ravine, and the line was formed at a distance of about four hundred yards behind them. In the highway were two 18-pounders, manned by Barney's seamen and protected by his seamen and marines acting as infantry. To the right of the road, a little in advance, was a battery of three 12-pounders, manned by the marine corps under Captain Miller, and to the left, Peter's battery of artillery with six guns. Lieutenant-Colonel Scott with five hundred regulars of the 12th, 36th and 38th Regiments, Colonel Brent with the 2nd Regiment of Washington militia, and Major Waring with a battalion of Maryland militia, were posted in the rear of Peter's battery. To the left of them were two rifle companies, under Captains Stull and Davidson, posted on an abrupt bluff which commanded the road. To the right of the road was Colonel Beall's regiment of Maryland militia. Altogether General Winder had twenty-four guns, and about six thousand five hundred men well posted on the heights in front of Bladensburg, when the British attacked him. With such a force, in a situation so

admirable for defence, it might have been supposed that the Americans would have offered a stubborn opposition to the advance of the British against their national capital, especially as their president was with them and they were fighting, as it were, under the eyes of their countrymen and indeed of the whole civilized world. The militia had been told a few months before on the floors of Congress by Mr. Wright of Maryland, from which state most of them came, that Ameri-



BATTLE OF BLADENSBURG NEAR WASHINGTON

can valour was superior to Roman valour, this gentleman saying, "He hoped whoever should speak hereafter of Roman valour on this floor, would be considered as speaking of the second degree and not of the first." Under these circumstances nothing less was to be expected than that Bladensburg would be an American Thermopylæ, but it proved to be only another Battle of Spurs.

The British army, after a toilsome march of fourteen miles beneath a hot August sun, reached Bladensburg at noon. Not a moment was lost in making an attack upon the strongly posted enemy. The British attacking force was in two columns, the right consisting of seven hundred and fifty rank and file of the 4th and 44th Regiments led by Colonel Brooke of the latter, and the left composed of the 85th Regiment and the light infantry companies of the army, numbering less than eight hundred men, under Colonel Thornton. As twelve of the enemy's guns enfiladed the bridge at short range both columns suffered severely in crossing, which they gallantly did under a vigorous fire both from the cannon and the riflemen. Once over the river, Colonel Brooke's column instantly stormed the six-gun battery, and captured three of the 6-pounders which one of the Baltimore artillery companies had abandoned after one discharge. The entire body of riflemen on both flanks of the battery, after firing once or twice, fled. Thus was the first line disposed of. Colonel Brooke's little column now advanced against the American second line, which numbered two thousand four hundred men, or more than threefold his force. The regiments of Ragan and Schultz, comprising Stansbury's brigade which General Smyth declared to be the finest set of men he ever saw, immediately became panic stricken, and to quote the language of an American historian, "fled in wild confusion." Colonel Sterrett's regiment held its ground a minute or two longer and then retired in such haste that its retreat, to quote again the same author, was soon "a disorderly flight." It is well to have American testimony for this remarkable display of American valour.

Colonel Thornton, in the meantime, had advanced with his column directly up the highway against the two guns which Colonel Wadsworth had posted on it to check the British. The latter, however, advanced so rapidly that the gunners had only time to give one discharge, when they also disappeared, leaving two 12-pounders in the hands of the British. Thornton now crossed the ravine and ascended the

opposite bank in the face of a heavy fire from Barney's 18-pounders. He then turned from the road to the field south of it from which Kramer's men had retreated, and deployed in front of Miller's battery of three 12-pounders. After a sharp contest with this battery and Barney's flotilla men, Thornton's force proceeded to turn the American right by a woods, and in doing so encountered Colonel Beall's regiment which dispersed after a few volleys. By this time Colonel Brooke's right column, after scattering their second line, had come on the left flank of their third line with such violence that the troops there, regulars and militia, instantly broke and fled, leaving Barney's left uncovered. This ended the contest; Barney's two 18-pounders and Miller's three 12-pounders were captured, and both these officers being left on the field severely wounded fell into the hands of the British. The Americans fled from the field with such alacrity that only about one hundred and twenty prisoners were taken. Ten cannon and two hundred and twenty stand of arms were captured. The bulk of the American army fled to Montgomery court-house in Maryland, but a great many of the militia never stopped running until they got to the safety of their own firesides. The American loss was very small, and, in addition to the prisoners taken, amounted to only twenty-six killed and fifty-one wounded. The British had sixty-four killed and one hundred and eighty-five wounded, the gallant Colonel Thornton being among the latter.

President Madison did not win undying glory on the field of Bladensburg. General Wilkinson, who himself was no paladin as his campaigns in Canada show, favours the public in his memoirs with a graphic description of the conduct and deportment of the chief executive of the United States, when brought into actual contact with "grim visaged war" itself. "Not all the allurements of fame," says Wilkinson, "not all the obligations of duty, nor the solemn invocations of honour, could incite a spark of courage; the love of a life which had become useless to mankind, and served but to embarrass the public councils, and prejudice the public cause,

stified the voice of patriotism and prevailed over the love of glory; and at the very first shot, the trembling coward with a faltering voice exclaimed: 'Come, General Armstrong: Come, Colonel Monroe: let us go, and leave it to the commanding general.'" A witty American writer turned this little speech into verse, in a neat parody of the words of Marmion, thus:—

"Fly, Monroe, fly! run Armstrong, run!
Were the last words of Madison."

Madison and his Cabinet not only fled, but they appear, as a further precaution, to have distributed themselves pretty well over the surrounding country. Two days later the president and his attorney-general were at Brookville in Maryland; Armstrong and Monroe were at Frederick in the same state, and the secretary of the navy was in Loudon county, Virginia.

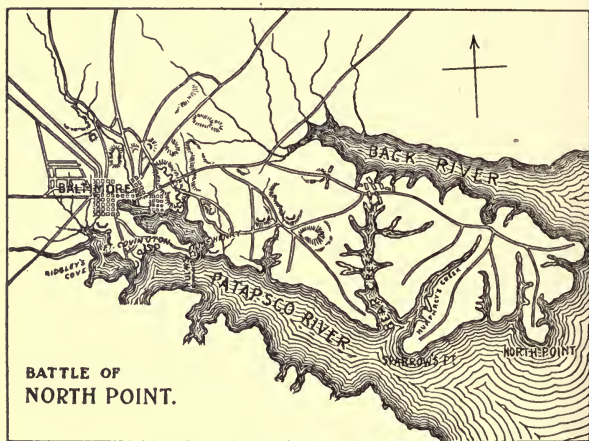
After the battle of Bladensburg General Ross halted his men for rest and refreshment, and then moved forward towards Washington which was reached about eight o'clock the same evening. The troops were drawn up some distance from the city while General Ross, Vice-Admiral Cockburn and several other officers accompanied by a small guard went forward to reconnoitre. They were fired upon from the house of one Sewell near the Capitol, and also from the Capitol itself, one of the shots killing a soldier and another the horse on which General Ross was riding. The light companies were at once brought up and the Capitol was taken possession of and set on fire. The house from which the shots had been fired was also burnt and likewise the building containing the treasury and war offices. The only public building left standing was the patent office. The Americans had themselves set fire to the Navy Yard and to the frigate *Columbia*, 44, and sloop *Argus*, 18, which were nearly ready for service. A prodigious amount of ammunition in the magazines was blown up and a vast quantity of stores of every description destroyed. On the following day the British completed the

work of destruction by burning two rope-walks and such stores and buildings in the Navy Yard as had escaped the torch the night before. The bridge across the eastern branch of the Potomac was also burnt. More than two hundred cannon were taken and destroyed, and the public property thus lost to the United States government was valued at more than \$2,000,000. The burning of the public buildings was a severe measure but a just one. It was but a proper return for the burning of the public buildings of York in the spring of 1813. It was in these halls of Congress that the Acts had been passed which led to the war. It was in these now ruined buildings that the invasion of Canada had been sanctioned and her fields, farmhouses and villages given up to destruction. It was there the proud boast had been made that Canada could be taken without soldiers; it was there that hypocritical prayers had been addressed to an all wise and all powerful God for His aid in the murder and enslavement of the people of Canada. And now the prayers had been answered to the confusion of those who made them, and President Madison and his instruments who had helped to complete the infamous bargain which was the price of his office, were in cowardly flight.

The British remained in possession of Washington the whole of the twenty-fifth of August, without seeing a sign of an enemy, and that night withdrew, retiring by Bladensburg to Upper Marlborough. They reached Benedict, fifty miles from Washington, on the twenty-ninth without the slightest molestation, and on the following day re-embarked in the vessels of the fleet. They had good reason to be proud of what they had achieved. In the course of ten days they had traversed one of the most thickly settled portions of the enemy's country for more than one hundred miles. They had compelled him to destroy his flotilla; they had defeated and dispersed his army; they had occupied his capital and given up his public buildings to the flames; they had set the rulers of his government skurrying across the country, a crowd of unhappy fugitives; and they had returned in safety

without a hand being raised against them. A cry of rage and despair arose from the whole population of the union at this unexpected calamity. The people of the seaboard cities were in daily expectation of a similar invasion, and for two or three months there was little heard around New York, Philadelphia, and other cities, but the sound of citizens plying the pickaxe and shovel as they raised intrenchments to resist the British. It was a sad and humiliating change from the condition of this arrogant people at the commencement of the war.

While the British were in possession of Washington, Cap-



BATTLE OF NORTH POINT, NEAR BALTIMORE

tain Gordon was ascending the Potomac to attack Alexandria. He reached Fort Washington on the twenty-seventh of August, and as soon as he opened fire upon it, the commander, Captain Dyson, blew up and abandoned the fort. The way was now clear to Alexandria, which Gordon reached on the evening of the twenty-eighth. On the following morn-

ing its humbled citizens appeared before the British commander and asked upon what terms he would spare the town. The terms were that all the public property should be delivered up, the vessels that had been sunk, raised, and the merchandise which had been removed, brought back. The loss sustained by the people of Alexandria by the surrender of their city consisted of three ships, three brigs, several small bay and river craft, sixteen thousand pounds of flour, one thousand hogsheads of tobacco, one hundred and fifty bales of cotton, and other goods to a large amount. After the surrender, Captain Gordon was joined by the *Fairy*, 18, which brought him orders from Vice-Admiral Cochrane to return. The river is very difficult to navigate, and the Americans made a desperate effort to stop him as he descended it. Commodores Rodgers, Perry, Porter and Creighton were all engaged in this work. Batteries were erected at various points along the banks and fire-ships were employed to destroy the British vessels, but these attempts failed and Gordon got back in safety to Chesapeake Bay with all his vessels, on the third of September, having suffered hardly any loss.

Baltimore was the next place to be attacked and no doubt would have easily fallen if assailed immediately after the capture of Washington. There was a good deal of delay, however, during which the Americans were laboriously preparing for the defence of the place by erecting earthworks and collecting troops. To prevent the British fleet from entering the harbour they sank twenty-four vessels in the narrow channel between Fort McHenry and Lazaretto Point. An extensive system of land fortifications had been constructed and all the works were strongly manned. There were about two thousand seamen of the navy in Baltimore whose ships had been blockaded there, and by them the batteries were largely served. In addition to these, General Smyth, who had charge of the defences of the city, had more than ten thousand land troops, and their number was being hourly increased.

Under these circumstances it certainly showed great daring on the part of the British to attempt the capture of a city so strongly fortified and garrisoned as Baltimore was. However the effort was to be made, and on the twelfth of September, about noon, General Ross and Rear-Admiral Cockburn landed at North Point, which is fifteen miles from Baltimore by land. The British force consisted of detachments of royal and marine artillery, parts of the first battalions of the 4th, 21st, and 44th Regiments, the 85th Regiment, the first and second battalions of marines, detachments of marines from the ships, and six hundred seamen, the whole numbering about three thousand three hundred rank and file. They advanced about three miles to a line of intrenchments which had been thrown up by the enemy, but these were immediately abandoned and the troops continued to move forward. A few miles beyond these works, the British general and the vice-admiral, who had with them a guard of about sixty men, encountered about four hundred of the enemy's riflemen, artillery, and cavalry, who had posted themselves at a point about eight miles from Baltimore, and a slight skirmish ensued. General Ross was in the act of moving alone towards his supports to order up the light troops when he was shot by two riflemen concealed in a hollow at the edge of the woods, and in the course of a few minutes breathed his last. The heavy loss the army had sustained was not known until, on the advance of the light companies, he was found lying in the road.

Colonel Brooke of the 44th Regiment, who now succeeded to the command of the army, pressed vigorously forward to where the American army under General Stricker was drawn up, about seven miles from Baltimore, in order of battle. This general had about four thousand five hundred men with him and six pieces of artillery, and his position was extremely favourable for defence, covering as it did a narrow front from a branch of Bear Creek on his right to a swamp on the margin of Back River on his left, and protected by a strong paling behind which the troops were formed. An attack was in-

stantly made. The light brigade, consisting of the 85th light infantry, and the light companies of the army, covered the whole of the front, driving in the enemy's skirmishers on his main body. The 4th Regiment by a *détour* gained unperceived a lodgment close upon the enemy's left. The remainder of the right brigade consisting of the 44th Regiment, the marines of the fleet and a detachment of seamen, formed a line along the enemy's front, while the left brigade consisting of the 21st Regiment, the second battalion of marines and a detachment of marines under Major Lewis remained in column on the road, with orders to deploy to the left and press the enemy's right the moment the ground became sufficiently open to admit of that movement. In this order, the signal being given, the whole of the troops advanced rapidly to the charge. The effect of the flanking movement of the 4th Regiment may be briefly described in the language of an American historian of the war. This writer says:—"The 51st were suddenly struck with dismay and after firing a volley at random, broke and fled in wild disorder, producing a like effect on the second battalion of the 39th. All efforts to rally the fugitives were in vain." The same writer to save the honour of his countrymen makes the remainder of the American army bravely maintain their position for a time and then retreat in good order. "Some of the wounded," says he, "and two fieldpieces were abandoned." Colonel Brooke does not take quite so many words to describe the affair. "In less than fifteen minutes," he writes, "the enemy's force being utterly broken and dispersed fled in every direction over the country, leaving on the field two pieces of cannon, with a considerable number of killed, wounded and prisoners." Of the latter, about two hundred were taken. The Americans according to their own account had but twenty-four killed and one hundred and twenty-nine wounded. The total British loss on shore amounted to forty-six killed and two hundred and seventy-three wounded.

The British troops being much fatigued, this being their first march after disembarkation, Colonel Brooke halted his

army for the night on the ground that had been occupied by the enemy, and early next morning, the thirteenth, advanced to within a mile and a half of Baltimore. From this point it was proposed to make a night attack upon the enemy's works. During that day the sea defences of Baltimore were bombarded by the British fleet, but as, owing to the shallowness of the water and the obstruction caused by the vessels that had been sunk in the narrow channel, the heavy ships could not approach nearer the fort than two miles and a half, very little damage was done, beyond dismounting one 24-pounder in Fort McHenry. Vice-Admiral Cochrane communicated to Colonel Brooke the information that, as the entrance to the harbour was obstructed by a barrier of vessels, the coöperation of the fleet in an attack on Baltimore would be impracticable, and consequently it was agreed to abandon the enterprise on the ground that the capture of the town would not be a sufficient equivalent for the loss which would probably be sustained in storming the heights. The army re-embarked at North Point on the fifteenth leaving not a man behind, and without the slightest molestation from the enemy, who were too much cowed by the result of the battle to leave their intrenchments.

The attack upon and capture of Castine and the territory about the Penobscot River, took place between the occupation of Washington and the attempt upon Baltimore. The expedition which was under the command of Sir John Cope Sherbrooke, governor of Nova Scotia, sailed from Halifax the last week in August. It consisted of the *Dragon*, 74, the frigates *Endymion* and *Bacchante*, and the sloop *Sylph*, with ten transports having on board a company of artillery, two companies of the 60th, and the 29th, 62nd and 98th Regiments, in all less than one thousand eight hundred rank and file. They reached the Penobscot on the thirty-first and were there joined by the *Bulwark*, 74, and four other ships of war. On the following day they appeared before the fort at Castine which was immediately blown up by its

commander, the garrison escaping up the river. The American corvette *Adams*, 28, had just returned from a cruise and was up the Penobscot. Arrangements were at once made for her destruction. This work was entrusted to Captain Barrie of the *Dragon*, and Lieutenant-Colonel John, who commanded the land forces detailed for the work. The latter consisted of six hundred men, comprising the flank companies of the 29th, 62nd and 98th Regiments, and one company of the 60th, besides a few artillerymen. They were embarked in four small vessels and several barges. Captain Morris of the *Adams* had made preparations to defend his vessel and stop the advance of the British by placing the heavy guns on a high bank of Soadabscook Creek, near Hampden, so as to command the river approaches from below. General Blake called out the militia and about six hundred of them were assembled at Hampden on the second of September, in addition to the crew of the *Adams* numbering two hundred and twenty, and about forty regulars who had escaped from Castine. This force on the morning of the third was attacked by the little British detachment and almost instantly dispersed. The militia of Maine fled without firing a shot, and regulars and seamen speedily followed their example. The British captured about eighty prisoners, as many as they could overtake, and they also took twenty-five pieces of cannon. Pushing on to Bangor they occupied that place, and accepted the surrender of General Blake and one hundred and ninety of his men. They took here two brass cannon, three stand of colours and other spoil. The *Adams* and two other ships, one of them armed, were destroyed by the enemy. Six vessels were burnt at Bangor and twelve were brought away. Altogether thirty-nine cannon, most of them of heavy calibre, were taken at Castine, Hampden and Bangor in addition to small arms and a large quantity of stores and ammunition. The British rebuilt and garrisoned the fort at Castine, and it remained in their possession to the end of the war.

On the ninth of September, Lieutenant-Colonel Pilkington

was sent with a small force to effect the capture of Machias, the naval part of the expedition being under the command of Captain Hyde Parker. The British disembarked at Buck's Harbour, and after a difficult night-march reached the rear of Fort O'Brien at daybreak on the tenth. The garrison, which consisted of seventy regulars and thirty militia, instantly evacuated the fort and escaped into the woods, leaving their colours behind them. Machias, East Machias, and the Point battery were occupied the same day, and altogether twenty-six pieces of ordnance were taken, besides one hundred and sixty stand of small arms and a quantity of ammunition. The militia of Washington county agreed not to bear arms during the war, and hostilities ceased. The result of these operations was that the whole of eastern Maine from the Penobscot to the New Brunswick boundary passed under British rule.

The only other operation of the war that remains to be mentioned is the expedition for the capture of New Orleans. A full description of this unfortunate affair is without the scope of this history. It was an enterprise which had no connection with the defence of Canada, either directly or indirectly, and the causes which set it on foot were quite apart from the other circumstances of the war. Undertaken on imperfect and erroneous information, with an entire ignorance of the difficulties natural and artificial that had to be overcome, and with inadequate means, success was rendered impossible by the numerous delays which retarded the British advance, and in the final battle the soldiers of the British army were simply led up to be slaughtered by riflemen who could not be reached because no sufficient means of scaling the works which protected them were at hand. On this point we have the evidence of Major Latour, the engineer officer who constructed the works for General Jackson, who says that the attack must have been determined on by the British generals "without any consideration of the ground, the weather, or the difficulties to be surmounted before they could storm lines defended by militia,

indeed, but by militia whose valour they had already witnessed, by soldiers, bending under the weight of their loads, when a man unencumbered would that day have found it difficult to mount our breastworks at leisure and with circumspection, so extremely slippery was the soil." It was quite natural that Major Latour should desire to exalt the valour of the militia who defended the breastworks at New Orleans, but it was not put to the test, for the entire loss they suffered was only six killed and seven wounded, so well were they protected, while the British loss was about two thousand. But if any American is disposed to think that the battle was won by the superior valour of his countrymen he need go no further than the report of General Jackson himself, to become disabused of this idea. For while the British were being led up to slaughter on one side of the river, they were victorious on the other. And to quote the very words of the American general: "Simultaneously with his advance on my lines he had thrown over in his boats a considerable force to the other side of the river. These having landed, were hardy enough to advance against the works of General Morgan, and what is strange and difficult to account for, the very moment when their entire discomfiture was looked for with a confidence approaching to certainty, the Kentucky reinforcements in which so much reliance had been placed, ingloriously fled, drawing after them by their example the remainder of the forces and thus yielding to the enemy that most formidable position."

Before the battle of New Orleans was fought, a treaty of peace had been signed at Ghent by the British plenipotentiaries and those of the United States. One of the latter was Henry Clay, who in a speech advocating the war had said of the British: "We must take the continent from them, I wish never to see a peace till we do." Yet this blustering demagogue, who had done so much to bring about a wholly unnecessary war, was glad enough to go to Europe, and to spend the better part of a year in begging a peace which had become absolutely necessary unless the United

States were to be wholly ruined and the union dissolved. The war had been undertaken by the United States ostensibly on account of the British refusing to yield the right of search and the impressment of seamen. In the instructions given to Clay and Russell in February, 1814, when leaving for Europe as peace plenipotentiaries, they were told to insist on the right of search and of impressment being abandoned by the British. "Our flag," said the instructions, "must protect the crew, or the United States cannot consider themselves an independent nation." The British plenipotentiaries wholly refused to yield to this demand, and the ostensible cause of the war was never mentioned at all in the treaty of peace. Yet, so weary were the people of the United States of the contest, so great was their joy at the return of peace, that the terms upon which it was made, so far from being criticized, were not even considered,—it was enough for them that the war was ended.

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